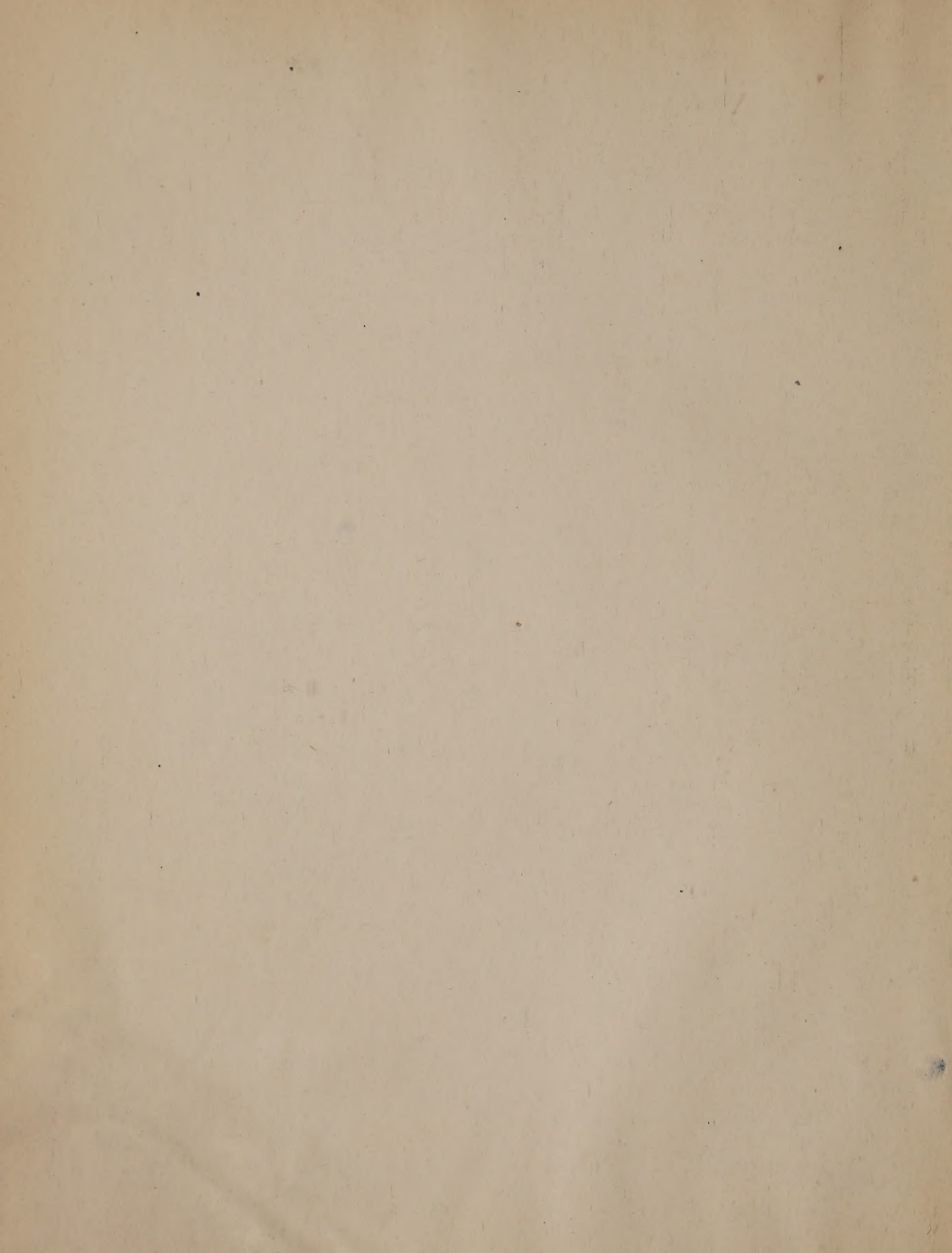




GREAT COMPOSERS







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GALLERY OF GREAT COMPOSERS.



GALLERY
OF
GREAT COMPOSERS.

A SERIES OF PORTRAITS, ENGRAVED ON STEEL,

FROM OIL PAINTINGS

By PROFESSOR CARL JÄGER.

REPRODUCED BY THE HELIOTYPE PROCESS.

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL NOTICES

By EDWARD F. RIMBAULT, LL.D.,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC
IN STOCKHOLM.



BOSTON:
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1876.





P R E F A C E .

THE present volume of Portraits of the most eminent German Composers will be welcomed by all true lovers of music and of art; and it has been prepared under the conviction that the "effigies" of those great men, whose talents culminated in the divine science, and whose works we so love and admire, would not prove an unacceptable offering to the public at large.

The value of a series of authenticated and well-engraved portraits cannot be overestimated. Mr. Walter F. Tiffin, in his admirable little book, "Gossip about Portraits" (1866, p. 34), has the following apt remarks: "In looking at portraits, besides the knowledge we gain of the features of persons we have heard or read of, we become impatient to know more of them, and we are led to seek out particulars of their lives and actions till we gradually form more than a passing acquaintance with them. Thus, in studying biography, we usually become not only better versed in general history, but get a peep into various vistas of knowledge that may lead us into many pleasant by-paths of social life. I shall not dwell on the

art-knowledge we may gain from the mere outward circumstances of pictures and engravings, but rather notice the fund of entertainment and information we may gather from that inner soul which pictures have; I mean the acquaintance obtained with the thoughts of those whose pictures are before us. To do justice to this, it would be necessary to instance so many engravings, that I shall content myself with simply mentioning the circumstance, particularly as my readers will easily recall to their minds many portraits that seem to tell their own story, to be what are called 'speaking' likenesses."

Our series appropriately commences with BACH, whose wonderful "Passions-Musik," after having been laid aside for so many years, is now assuming a new vitality. Next to him comes HANDEL, — the giant Handel! Then we have GLUCK, who first revolutionized dramatic music; he is followed by HAYDN and MOZART, for whom he paved the way. Then comes the great BEETHOVEN, and his fellow-worker, SCHUBERT, — the latter has had only tardy justice done to his memory. Then the admirable and energetic WEBER, and the great artists SCHUMANN and MEYERBEER, whose high claims to musical distinction cannot be disputed, appropriately take their places; whilst the series is brought to a conclusion by WAGNER, the great living reformer of dramatic music.

The portraits now presented have been carefully executed on steel, from oil paintings by an eminent artist, Professor Carl Jäger, and are engraved in a manner that may entitle them to be held valuable as works of art.

To the curious, and those more particularly conversant with music and art, it must be an interesting study to compare the lineaments of an author with his labors, and to trace the strange and sometimes intimate analogies which exist between the features of individuals and the most magnificent creations of the human mind.

"A portrait," it has been well remarked, "is an uninteresting object, unless we have some information respecting the person represented; but then, if we are interested in the subject, how absorbing is that 'picture of the life'—the literal 'biography'—we see before us!"


The biographical and critical notices which accompany each portrait are necessarily short and sketchy. No effort has been made to furnish a full account of the different composers who are touched upon. "Just as in passing along a gallery of portraits, or noticing those in a great house, we pause not only to criticise the figure, or the complexion or expression of the face, but to remark such and such an event in the life of him or her who is before us." Care has been taken with regard to special facts and dates, but nothing like serious biography has been thought of or attempted.

Should the present work be well received by the public, it is contemplated to continue it in a series of portraits of the great composers of other countries, engraved in the same style of art, and produced with the same care.

EDWARD F. RIMBAULT.



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JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH.

THE name placed at the head of this notice, and which appropriately commences our "Gallery of Musical Portraits," is that of one of the greatest musicians who ever lived. Bach has an especial claim to our gratitude, because he was among the first of those eminent men who turned their attention to the development of the hidden sources of the divine art. He was a successful worker in all its branches. He helped to lay the foundation-stone upon which succeeding composers of eminence have been content to raise their structures, and it is not without just cause that the world accords to him that high place which he occupies in the temple of musical fame.

John Sebastian Bach was born in the same year as Handel, and in the same part of Germany, namely, 1685, March 21, at Eisenach, in Thuringia, where his father, John Ambrose Bach, held the post

of court and town musician. His mother died when he was a mere child, and his father lived only to February, 1695, when John Sebastian was not quite ten years of age. Being thus left an orphan, he was placed under the care of an elder brother, John Christopher, who was organist at Orduff, in Weimar. From him he learnt the principles of the art in which his family for several generations had held some distinction.

A small, and perhaps insignificant episode in the young student's early life is characteristic of his ardent love of music. His brother possessed a MS. which contained clavier pieces by the greatest masters of the time, — Froberger, Buxtehude, J. C. Kerl, Fischer, Pachelbel, etc. This book attracted the attention of young John Sebastian, but its use was constantly denied him. He, however, procured it by stealth, and copied the valued pieces. As he was obliged to do this in secret, he could only write on moonlight nights. It is recorded that this self-imposed task occupied him six months. He had scarcely finished his labors when his brother discovered the transcript, and took it from him, and he did not regain it until, shortly afterwards, the death of his brother left the boy again without a protector.

In this destitute condition young John Sebastian, in company with a schoolfellow, visited Luneburg, and obtained an engagement in the choir of St. Michael's College in that city. Here his singing was much admired (he is said to have had a very sweet voice), and he



kept his situation as long as his voice lasted, receiving a classical and musical education in that seminary of learning. During his three years' residence at Luneburg he studied his art with diligence, and persevered in the practice of the clavichord, organ, and also the violin. With his small means he contrived to make frequent visits to Hamburg, to hear the celebrated organist Reinken, who at that time was noted for his performance. He also visited Zell, to hear the famous orchestra there; in fact, losing no opportunity that could afford him improvement in his beloved art.

In 1703 Bach quitted Luneburg and went to Weimar, where he was engaged as a performer on the violin in the band of the duke. In the following year he exchanged this place for that of organist to the new church at Arnstadt, probably to be able to follow his inclination for studying that instrument which has since rendered his name so famous.

In 1707 he accepted the post of organist of the church of St. Blasius, Mulhausen, at which place he probably married his relative, the daughter of John Michael Bach, of Gehren, a cousin of his father's, by whom he had seven children, five sons and two daughters. A year afterwards he was made court organist of Saxe-Weimar. The excitement which his performances created, the applause of great people, and the pleasure of moving in a more extended sphere, were incentives which led him on to higher walks in his art, and laid the foundation of some of his great compositions.

In 1714 he was made director of the court concerts at Saxe-Weimar, and a few years later *Kapell-meister* to the same court. On the death of Zachau, Handel's old master, Bach was invited to succeed him at Halle, but for some unknown reason the post was given to Kirchoff, a pupil of the former organist. Some time after this he accepted the place of *Kapell-meister* to the Prince of Anhalt-Coethen, which he held for about six years, during which time he made a journey to Hamburg, where the celebrated organist Reinken (then nearly a hundred years old) paid him a high compliment on account of his organ playing.

In 1723 the most important event in Bach's career occurred,—his appointment to be director of the music and “cantor” to the celebrated St. Thomas's School at Leipsic. Here he remained during the rest of his life, and here a large collection of his cantatas, motets, and other sacred compositions is still to be found in his own handwriting. His appointment as cantor of this great school was combined with some functions which brought him in frequent contact with the court of Saxony. He, consequently, often visited Dresden, and performed in public and at court. In 1736 he was honored with the title of “Court Composer” to the King of Poland, Elector of Saxony. The Duke of Weissenfels also conferred upon him the distinction of Ducal *Kapell-meister*.

Bach had now attained the summit of his greatness; his simple and homely nature found its chief pleasure in his family circle, in

witnessing the successes of his elder sons, whom he had taught to emulate himself, and in training his younger children to follow in their course. His family was a large one. He had lost his first wife and married a second, by whom he had thirteen children, making a family of twenty in all, eleven sons and nine daughters.

Frederick the Great, as famous for his love of music as renowned for his battles, often inquired of Bach's second son, Emanuel (who had an appointment in his court), after his father; in consequence of which Bach was persuaded in 1747 to visit Potsdam. The king paid him the greatest attention, and laid before him an intricate subject for a figure to extemporize upon, which Bach did in an astonishing manner. He afterwards published several compositions upon this subject under the title of "*Musicalisches Opfer*" (musical offering), which he dedicated to the king who had originated the work. This was Bach's last journey, and he returned to Leipsic to quit it no more. His sight had been injured at a very early age, perhaps by the moonlight transcription of his brother's forbidden volume, and it now failed him so greatly that he was persuaded to let an English oculist operate upon him. The experiment was unsuccessful, and a second attempt reduced the sufferer to total blindness. It is supposed that this course of treatment, and the violent medicines that accompanied it, induced the illness which prostrated Bach for six months, and ended with his death. Ten days before this took place his sight suddenly returned, but after a few hours he became deliri-

ous, had an apoplectic fit, and soon after breathed his last. This event occurred in the evening of the 28th of July, 1750. He was buried in St. John's Churchyard, Leipsic; his wife and nine of his children survived him.

Such is the history of the outward life of one of the greatest and most remarkable men of the modern world. The knowledge of what he did as a performer we are compelled to derive from history and the uniform reports of his contemporaries. But of the spiritual element of his art, and the forms in which he moulded it, we can ourselves judge from a study of his works which are extant in sufficient numbers to gather from them the greatness and originality of his productive genius. In all his compositions there is no phrase, or note, that does not express something, and clearly something that it was intended to say. We find no passage written merely for the sake of the rhythm, and which might be omitted. All that he does is from necessity. Starting upon the principle of unity, and always bearing this in mind, he puts down his fundamental idea so clearly that we never lose sight of his aim. But in the working out the chief idea appears in so many forms of combination and contrast that the hearer is carried to the highest reality of this intention. Each "voice" in his composition, so to say, is an independent melodious thread, which, nevertheless, freely joins itself to the firmly united texture; thus the artistic whole is logically developed, clear and distinct in all its parts. His famous "*Passions-Musik*" is the clearest manifestation of his

transcendent genius; but before we can thoroughly appreciate this work of the mighty master we must get accustomed to his idiom, — a sort of archaic dialect which pervades it. This once accomplished, the work will take as deep a root in English minds as that of his contemporary, the more intelligible Handel.

“As Bach despised popular applause,” remarks a well-known critic, “so his music is little open to popular appreciation, and it is, and always will be, much more interesting and much more satisfactory to those who participate in its performance than to any passive listener; his music is beyond that of any other composer difficult of comprehension, but its masterly beauties will ever repay the pains of the student who unravels them.”







GEORGE FREDERIC HANDEL.

ALTHOUGH Bach and Handel were contemporaries, they never saw each other. Born in the same year, and dying within a few years of the same time, they may be said to have worked together, and for the same end. Their lives, however, were passed very differently: the one at home, quietly carrying out his particular views as regards art; the other all activity, busy in the theatre, conducting the performances of his own works, and even taking prominent part in the active affairs of human life.

George Frederic Handel was born at Halle, in Lower Saxony, on the 23d of February, 1685, and his baptism was entered in the register of the church of Notre Dame de St. Laurent on the following day. His father was a surgeon, and he had many relations in very respectable positions of life. He was the child of an advanced age, his father being sixty-three at the time of his son's birth. The old surgeon

intended him for the law, and, with this view, strove to check the propensity towards music which the child showed, even in his earliest years. He prohibited his access to musical instruments, and cut off all means and opportunities of cultivating his favorite art. But nature was too strong for the man; the child practised upon a dumb spinet in his own room at night, and through the influence of a half-brother got access to the organ of the reigning Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, who heard the boy play, and persuaded his father to allow him to follow the bent of his natural genius. Accordingly he was placed under Zachau, the organist of the cathedral at Halle. At an early age he went to Berlin, where he passed for a prodigy, and attracted the notice of the king. Soon afterwards his father died, and it became necessary for him to act for himself. He chose Hamburg for his residence, and was appointed to a subordinate situation in the orchestra of the opera house, where he produced several operas.

The next object of the young musician was to visit Italy: the city in which he made his *début* was Florence. How a mind like his must have enjoyed all that was inspiring in nature and in art! What soul such as Handel's could breathe even the very air of Florence and not feel its inspirations? Venice, Rome, and Naples were next visited; at each city his operas being produced with success.

On his return to Germany he resided for some time at Hanover; and the connection between this court and that of London suggested to him the idea of visiting England.



Handel first came to England in 1710, and remained for about six or seven months, when he returned to his native country. In 1712, however, he again came to London, which from that time became his home.

The second epoch of Handel's life dates from the period when he first set foot upon English soil. The Italian opera, so much censured by Addison in the "*Spectator*," was then rising into considerable notice. Handel was immediately employed to compose the music of "*Rinaldo*," a dramatic composition founded on the "*Gierusalemme Liberata*" of Tasso. This opera contains the remarkable air "*Lascia che io Pianga*," one of those strains which can never die.

In 1718 he received an invitation from the Duke of Chandos to undertake the direction of the music of the chapel, at his superb mansion of Cannons. While in this situation he composed his celebrated anthems, a great number of instrumental pieces, the serenata of "*Acis and Galatea*," and the oratorio of "*Esther*."

About the beginning of 1720 Handel threw himself with great energy into the service of a body of noblemen and gentlemen, who joined together for the production of Italian operatic music. George I. was a subscriber, and allowed the association to be called the Royal Academy of Music. Here Handel came in contact again with Bononcini, whom he had known as a rival in Italy. The rivalry continued in London. Bononcini had his admirers, who pitted him against Handel as a composer. The contest ran very high, and the musical world

was divided into two parties; their comparative powers were to be tested in the opera of "Muzio Scævola." The drama was in three acts, Ariosti, an established musician of his day, composed the first act, Bononcini the second, Handel the third. The contest has passed away, and the opera, which created such an intense interest, has become a thing of the past; so little can we depend upon the permanency of what engages the attention of the day.

Up to 1729 Handel's affairs seem to have been very prosperous; at that time he was worth £10,000, but theatrical speculations became most unproductive. The tide turned against him, and for years he was destined to contend against difficulties; he struggled manfully, but in the end was beaten. This era is an interesting one to us, because it turned his attention more particularly to oratorios.

Handel's oratorios, properly so called, amount to seventeen. They commenced with "Esther," composed in 1720; "Deborah," in 1733, the period when he was becoming involved in difficulties; "Athalia," 1733; "Saul," 1738; "Israel in Egypt," 1738; "Messiah," 1741, with which he visited Ireland. After his return from Ireland he wrote "Samson," 1743; "Joseph," 1743; "Belshazzar," 1745; "Occasional Oratorio," 1745; "Judas Maccabæus," 1746; "Alexander Balus," 1747; "Joshua," 1747; "Solomon," 1748; "Susannah," 1748; "Theodora," 1750; "Jephtha," 1752.

In 1737 Handel had an attack of paralysis, but was cured by the waters of Aix-la-Chapelle in so remarkable a manner that the nuns,

who heard him playing the organ almost immediately after his bath, set his recovery down as a miracle. But at this others demurred when it was known that he was a Lutheran, or, in other words, a heretic.

For several years Handel struggled on with his difficulties, but without effect. He resolved, therefore, in 1741, to visit Ireland, from which country he had received cordial invitations from all ranks. He had just finished the "Messiah." He took the MS. with him, and in Dublin was the first performance of this immortal work.

Handel remained in Ireland from November the 4th, 1741, to September the 5th, 1742. After his return to London he composed many of his greatest works, as we have enumerated in the list just given.

Handel's affairs from this time, with some varieties, soon began to wear a brighter aspect. He gave up operatic composition entirely, and adhered closely to his oratorios. He lived long enough to pay all his debts and to accumulate another fortune. His oratorios in the last year of his life yielded nearly £2,000.

In 1752 his sight began to fail. He had gutta serena, the same complaint as caused Milton's blindness. As it was the will of God that Beethoven should be afflicted by loss of hearing, Handel was visited by loss of sight. In 1753 he was quite blind. A few years later his health began to decline, and it was evident the time of his departure was drawing near. He, however, continued his exertions in

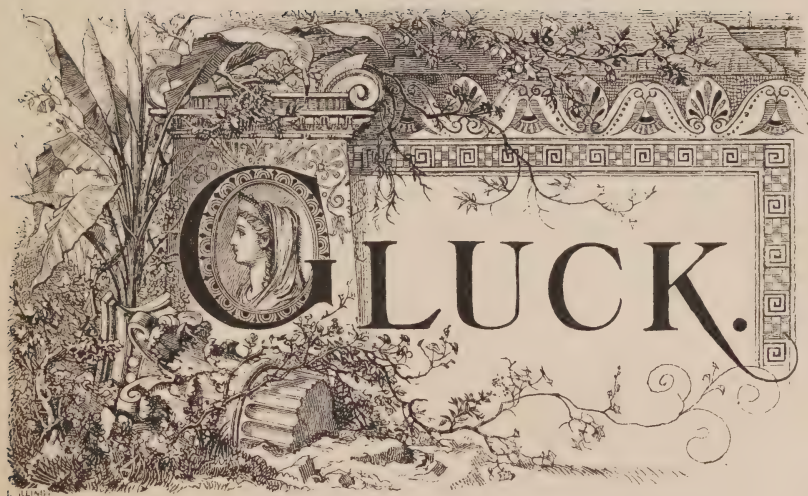
public till within a week of his death, which occurred on the 14th of April, 1759.

A public funeral was awarded to this highly gifted and good man. Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester, performed the service, assisted by the choir of Westminster Abbey; where stands the great composer's monument by Roubilliac. It is finely imagined, and beautifully sculptured; the figure of Handel is seen at full length, the head marked by strong character and expression. The sculptor, with equal truth and propriety, has placed in the hand of the composer a scroll of music with the notes and words of "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

In looking for a parallel with the great composer, we think, with Dean Ramsay, that Handel may fitly be compared with Milton, for both stand upon the same elevated platform. "Like Milton, Handel's highest powers are called forth in sacred song; like Milton, he rises to the highest point of sublimity when he is engaged with expressing the worship of the redeemed above. Grandeur, majesty, and elevation of thought are the distinguishing marks of both, and such is the character impressed on the productions of both, — the music of Handel, the poetry of Milton. For although both can descend from their high moral elevation, and can occupy their talents on the beautiful, the tender, and elegant, — although Milton fascinates us in his lighter works as 'L'Allegro,' 'Penseroso,' and 'Comus,' — although Handel is charming and even playful in his music of Milton's words in the two first of these pieces, and also in his setting of Gay's serenata of 'Acis and

Galatea,' still we feel in both Milton and Handel that it is the great man condescending to be like other men. In all the emanations of their genius there is a dignity which reminds us of the power that is behind. They cannot altogether forget the high calling of their immortal song."





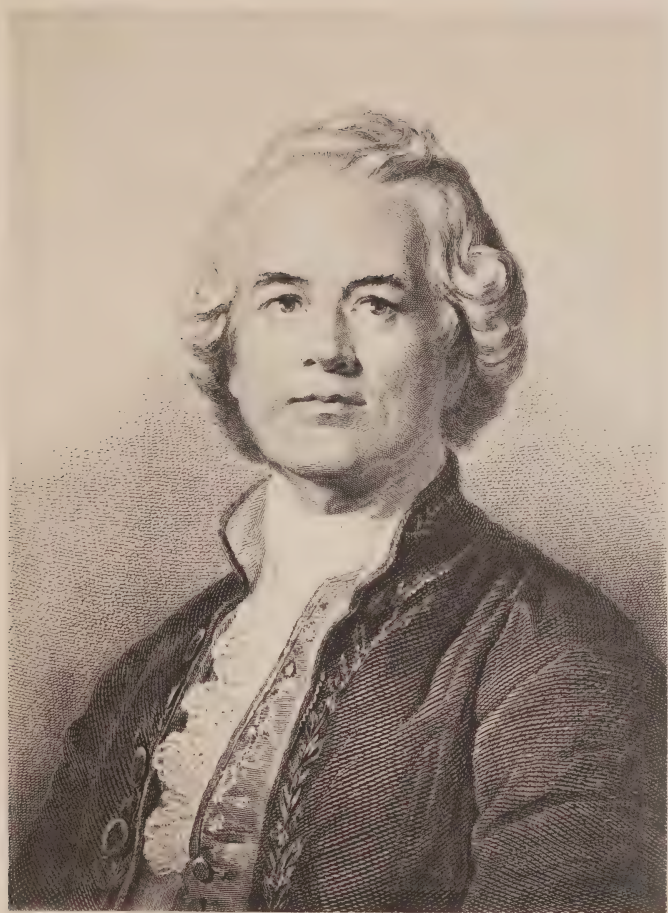


CHRISTOPHER GLUCK.

AMONG the composers of the last century, none contributed more to the improvement of dramatic music than the celebrated Christopher Gluck. He was, in fact, the regenerator of the opera, and his influence extended over Germany, France, and partly over Italy. He was born July 2, 1714, at Weidenwang, in the Upper Palatinate. Early in his childhood, his father, huntsman to the Prince Lobkowitz, removed into Bohemia, and soon afterwards died, leaving his son unprovided for, and without the means of education. But Gluck was born a musician; and in Bohemia, a certain degree of instruction in this art was accessible even to the poorest. He learnt to play on several instruments, particularly the violoncello, by means of which he was enabled to support himself by travelling from town to town, till at last he made his way to Vienna, where he earned money enough to procure something of a regular education. He had the good fortune to obtain

the protection of a nobleman, who took him to Italy. At Milan he received instruction from the celebrated Padre Martini; and during a residence of four years in that country he composed several operas, which were performed at Milan, Venice, Cremona, and Turin. In 1745 his reputation was such that he was invited to visit England in the capacity of composer to the King's Theatre, then under the management of Lord Middlesex. But he had not then acquired the great style which afterward distinguished him, and his compositions were attended with very moderate success. The best of them was "Artamene," which contained the beautiful air of "Rasserena il mesto ciglio."

Gluck returned to Italy, and afterwards to Vienna, with his mind filled with new views of the principles of his art, — the fruits of observation and experience. He had become convinced that the object of the Italian composers was more to gratify the ear than to render their music subservient to the action of the drama. He admitted the beauty of the Italian airs, but thought them deficient in energy and strength of expression. "It was his idea," says an able critic, "to reassert the supreme dramatic capability of music, connecting every phrase with the requirement of the situation, the personality of the characters, and the expression of the words; to avoid all conventionality of construction, and to found his forms exclusively on the exigencies of the action; it was, in fact, with the advantage of the immensely enlarged resources of the art which the development of two hundred years had placed at



his disposal, to embody anew the lofty purposes which had induced the invention of the opera, and of recitative as its characteristic feature." He determined, therefore, to abandon the Italian style, in which his own operas had hitherto been written; and as his objections applied to the poetry as well as the music of the Italian stage, he felt it necessary to have a dramatist willing to co-operate with him in his plan of reform. Such a poet he found in Calzabigi, who wrote the operas of "Orfeo" and "Alceste," — pieces of great dramatic merit, which the music of Gluck has rendered immortal.

Notwithstanding the manner in which these operas were given on the Viennese stage, they ultimately failed of permanent success. They did not appeal to the popular taste, and there was no middle class of sufficiently elevated taste to give encouragement and abiding interest to works of this calibre. Gluck himself confessed that his expectations had been disappointed, and his endeavors "to restore dramatic music to its proper aim and object" had not succeeded in Germany.

Gluck looked for a better reception in Paris. He rightly judged that the time had not come, when, after the operetta interlude, the grand opera, with his amendments, would find favor. He commenced his career in the latter city in 1774, and met with decided success. His operas were rapturously received by the Parisians, on account of their forcible, energetic, and dramatic character. The cry was that Gluck had revived the music of the ancient Greeks, and was the only musician in Europe who knew how to express the passions. The

journals were filled with his praises, and with violent attacks on the Italian music, when Piccini arrived on the scene in 1776.

The partisans of the Italian school immediately rallied round the new-comer; a furious war raged between the two parties. The *literati* ranged themselves on either side. The press groaned with pamphlets, and the journals teemed with dissertations, not more remarkable for zeal and violence than for entire ignorance of the subject.

While Gluck's enemies were busily spreading reports that he had nothing new to give France, he produced his "Armide," of which the libretto (previously set by Lully) was by Quinault,—an opera differing entirely from any of his former ones. Its performance was attended with success. Piccini followed suit with his "Roland," which achieved a brilliant triumph. Devismes, the manager of the theatre, now conceived the idea of taking advantage of the general excitement by bringing the two composers into more immediate comparison than that in which they had yet stood with each other. He accordingly engaged them each to write an opera on the same subject, naturally expecting that the supporters of both would redouble their zeal to vindicate the relative merits of the rival works. The subject chosen was "Iphigénie en Tauride," which Piccini undertook with the condition that his setting of it should be the first produced, and he accordingly entered on the work, while his rival went to Vienna, carrying the libretto with him. The appearance of the first "Iphigénie," in 1778, was a temporary triumph for the Pic-

cinists; but its glory was dimmed when Gluck's opera was brought out, May 18, 1779, which proved to be his greatest work, and which surpassed in its success everything he had already written. It combined both the French and Italian peculiarities of powerful dramatic expression and beautiful melody. Indeed, it is the grandest lyrical tragedy that could possibly be created in the antique spirit, but with modern appliances of art,—in music what Goethe's tragedy is in poetry,—the revival of Greek art in the German mind.

After bringing out his opera of "Echo et Narcisse," and giving over the setting of the "Danaïdes" to Salièri, Gluck, worn out with strife and overwork, returned to Vienna, where he died, November 17, 1787, a few days after the first performance of Mozart's "Don Giovanni," leaving a considerable fortune. His bust was placed in the opera house at Paris beside those of Lully, Quinault, and Rameau, and below it the following inscription: "Musas præposuit Sirenis."

Gluck was a Knight of the Papal Order of the Golden Spur, as was also Mozart, and other musicians. "It is a characteristic feature that Gluck laid great stress on his rank. He resembled Klopstock in this particular, who held 'that the artist's calling should meet with due recognition and honor.'"

Rousseau's admiration for the genius of Gluck, as soon as he became acquainted with his works, is well known. He one day remarked, that the great merit of this composer was the giving a

distinct character to the songs of each of his personages, which was never departed from throughout. "This attention," said he, "has caused him to commit an anachronism in his opera of 'Paris and Helena.' The songs of Paris have all the richness and effeminacy of Phrygian manners, whilst those of Helena are constantly grave and simple; but Gluck has forgotten that the severity of manners was dated only from the legislation of Lycurgus, and that Helena was born at Spar a long before Lycurgus." A common friend of Rousseau and Gluck, to whom the former made this observation, communicated it to the latter. His answer is remarkable: "I should be very happy," said he, "if my works were always examined by such enlightened and scrupulous judges. M. Rousseau's reasoning is very ingenious, but it was not my own. Helena loved Paris, but I find in Homer that she sought to elevate his mind, and to excite in him the desire of glory; I see that she was esteemed by Hector, and the eulogium she drew from the old men as she passed supposes as much esteem for her character as admiration of her beauty. Thus, by giving her a simple and grave style of singing, but one which I esteem elegant, it is not simply a Spartan woman that I wish to characterize, but a great and generous mind."

The quarrels of the "Gluckists" and "Piccinists" were of considerable importance in furthering the progress of French taste. The feud passed away; while the public, from hearing the finest

specimens of the German and Italian schools, became more and more capable of feeling and appreciating the beauties of both.

Gluck's influence on the opera of Italy was not very material; still it was a considerable step gained even there. The composers abandoned some of their set forms, although the *bravura* embellishments of the *aria* remained the same. Far more considerable was the influence which the reform of Gluck had upon the opera of Germany, where the composers became, from his example, particularly assiduous in the study of expression. Thus, he may be said to have prepared the way for Haydn and Mozart.

The five works by which Gluck is now known are "Orphée," "Alceste," "Iphigénie en Aulide," "Armide," and "Iphigénie en Tauride." The last remains a standard work on the German stage, and has been more than once produced by German companies in London. "Orphée" was revived in Paris, in November, 1859, where the sensation it created was such as to induce its reproduction at the Royal Italian Opera in London, in 1860; and Mr. Hallé subsequently gave an English version of Gluck's five masterpieces, at his Manchester concerts, with success amounting to enthusiasm.





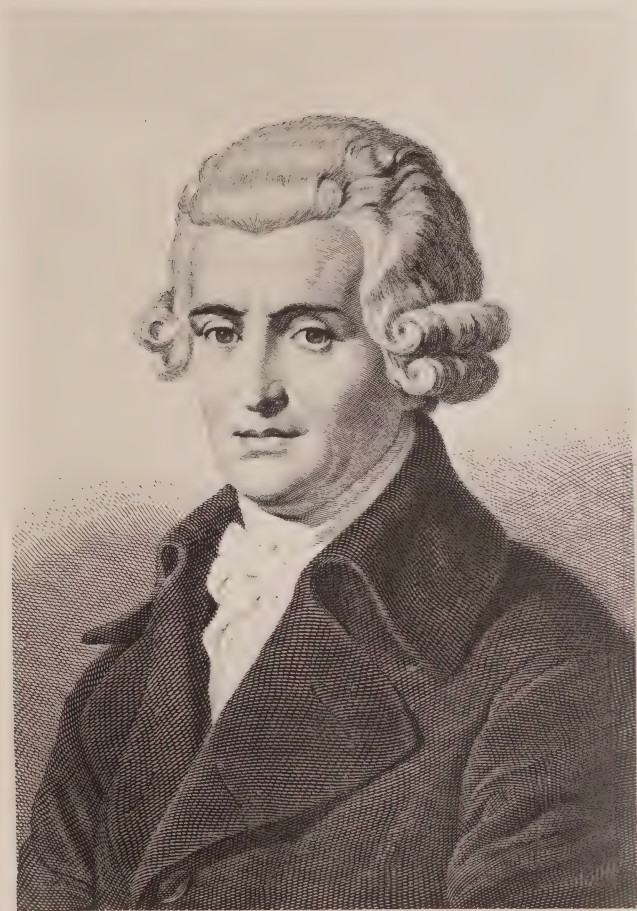
JOSEPH HAYDN.

THE writings of the great composer now to be noticed form an epoch in the history of art. He it was who invented that most interesting kind of chamber music, the scientific and intellectual quartet, who gave a form to the grand symphony, and who brought combined instrumental music to a degree of perfection which had never been foreseen. He carried music out of school and church into the freshness and reality of life,—home to the feelings of the multitude, “even as it weeps and laughs.”

Joseph Haydn, in one of his letters, says: “I was born on the last day of March in 1733, in the market town of Rohrau, near Prugg, on the river Leitha, in Lower Austria. The calling of my late father was that of a wheelwright (in the service of Count Harrach). He was a great lover of music by nature, and played the harp without knowing a note of music; while, as a boy of five, I

sang all his simple pieces very fairly; this induced my father to send me to the tutor of the school at Hainburg, a relative of ours, in order to learn the first elements of music, and other juvenile acquirements. Our Almighty Father (to whom above all I owe the most profound gratitude) had endowed me with so much facility in music, that even in my sixth year I was bold enough to sing some masses in the choir, and also played a little on the clavecin and violin." In his ninth year Haydn was sent to Vienna in the capacity of chorister. There, in the choir of St. Stephen's, he received a good practical education in music; his early attempts at composition were aided by Fux's "*Gradus ad Parnassum*" (at that time a standard work on composition), and Mattheson's "*Vollkommener Kapellmeister*." After eight years, when his voice broke, he was dismissed, and for the ten succeeding ones poverty and privation were his lot; his earnings being scarcely sufficient to eke out a scanty subsistence. But he was of a happy and contented mind. "Sitting at my old worm-eaten harpsichord," he says, "I envied no king upon his throne." He had even to reckon it a privilege to be allowed to accompany the renowned Porpora when he gave singing lessons. The latter, indeed, treated him no better than a servant; "but I put up with everything, for I learnt a great deal of Porpora, in singing, composition, and Italian."

In the mean time some piano-forte sonatas and trios, published without his knowledge, caused his name to become known, which



led to his being appointed, in 1760, *Kapell-meister* to Prince Esterhazy, — an appointment he held for thirty years. The prince resided a great portion of the year at his seat in Hungary, only visiting Vienna for a few months in winter, and maintained a band and choir of his own for opera, — Italian, of course, — concert, and church music. “Haydn,” says Dr. Schlüter, “had not only to rehearse and conduct the performers, but, as was always expected of a *Kapell-meister* in those days, to write nearly all the music himself. This was the origin of most of his symphonies and quartets (together with those written at a later date, one hundred and eighteen and eighty-three in number); his concertos and trios each twenty-four in number; forty-four sonatas; nineteen operas (fourteen Italian and five German *Marionnette* operas); fifteen masses; the oratorio ‘Il ritorno di Tobia’; and about four hundred dances. Besides the above works, he wrote one hundred and sixty-three pieces for the barytone, — a species of viol-di-gamba, similar to our violoncello, and the prince’s favorite instrument. A good many of the symphonies were *pièces d’occasion*, — among them the ‘Children’s’ (for piano-forte and seven toy instruments) and ‘Depart’ symphonies, which latter owes its effect more to the ingenious idea of letting one instrument after another cease, than to any great musical originality. . . . Thus Haydn found, in his constant and varied duties, the best opportunity for improving his talents and forming his style. ‘My prince,’ he says, ‘was pleased with my productions; I received commenda-

tion; as leader of an orchestra I was enabled to make experiments, to observe, and learn what contributes, as well as mars, effect; to improve, add, withdraw, to make experiments. I lived apart from the great world, with no one near to confuse or annoy me; and thus I could not fail to become original.’”

In 1790 Prince Esterhazy died; a new field was now opened for the labors of the great master, and this was the one in which he has left the most imperishable imprints of his power. Salomon, the violinist, resident in London, on hearing of the prince's death, hurried off to Vienna, having long had Haydn in view for the London concerts. A negotiation was entered into, and Haydn accompanied Salomon to London, where he remained a year and a half; and, after two years, returned thither for the same length of time. “During the three years of his residence in London Haydn wrote, besides a number of smaller pieces, six of his finest quartets, and those incomparable twelve (entitled) ‘London Symphonies,’ which the world admires so much: one in C minor, with the lovely ‘minuet’ trio (for violoncello concertante); the truly sublime one in B, with the grand ‘finale,’ the so-called ‘Military Symphony’; one in G with the ‘clock’ movement, and others.”

On his second visit to London Haydn composed eight pieces of an opera called “Orfeo,” for performance at the King's Theatre; but the production being delayed, he left the country without completing it. He also wrote the well-known English “Canzonets,”

and the Italian cantata "Ariana in Naxos," which last he published himself at his lodgings in Great Pulteney Street. "He received here," says one of his recent biographers, "the greatest honors from all ranks and all classes; the King and the Prince of Wales paid him marked attention; the public applauded him with enthusiasm, and the University of Oxford conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Music; and he took away with him such a sum as secured his independence for the remainder of his life."

Haydn returned to Vienna, and purchased a house and garden in one of the suburbs, where he lived quietly and comfortably till his death on the 31st of May, 1809. It was during this latter period that his two great works, "The Creation" and "The Seasons," were composed.

The origin of these works is thus related by Mr. Macfarren: "The Baron von Swieten, a Viennese amateur, entertained the fanciful conceit that the imitation of visible forms and motions was within the province of music. In pursuance of this idea, he planned the scheme of the oratorio of 'The Creation,' and proposed the composition of the work to Haydn, who eagerly entered into his views. Swieten compiled the text of this work, interpolating matter of his own between the scriptural passages he selected, and writing the entire of the third part. Haydn entered upon his task with profound earnestness, labored at it with feelings of the deepest devotion, and spent a greater time upon it than he had ever given to the same amount

of composition, saying that he meant the work to live long, and must not therefore hasten its production. Accounts vary as to when he began to write this oratorio; the most natural seems to be that it was not until 1797, but he doubtless gave long preconsideration to its plan. It was completed in April, 1798. Its first performance was at the Schwarzenberg Palace in Vienna, 19th March, 1799, and its success exceeded that of any musical work that had ever been produced. In England there was a rivalry between Salomon and Ashley (the directors of the oratorio performances at Covent Garden Theatre) as to who should first introduce 'The Creation' to the public, and Ashley outwitted his competitor by the aid of a king's messenger, — an official who then had more rapid means of transit than any other traveller, — who privately brought him a copy of the score. This arrived on a Saturday night, and the work being copied and studied in the interim, was performed on the Friday following, 23d March, 1800. In every other country there was a like eagerness for the production of the new oratorio, and the artistic societies of each conferred their membership on the composer.

"'The Seasons' was another work in which Haydn had Swieten for a coadjutor, who compiled the text of this secular oratorio from Thomson's poem, with sundry insertions of his own. Its composition is said to have occupied eleven months, and it was first performed 24th April, 1801. Its success, though great, was not equal to that of 'The Creation,' nor has it ever been so popular as this work; but just criticism cannot pronounce it of less merit.

As to the intrinsic merit of these two works, when compared with each other, Haydn expresses himself as follows: "My 'Creation' will endure, and probably 'The Seasons' also." On being congratulated on every side, after the first performance of the latter, he replied, "It is not 'The Creation'; there angels sing, here rustics."

An interesting passage bearing on these works occurs in a letter to Mendelssohn from his father. We give it from Lady Wallace's translation (Letters, Vol. II. p. 78): "It seems to me that both the oratorios of Haydn were, in their sphere, also very remarkable phenomena. The poems of both are weak, regarded as poetry; but they have replaced the whole positive and almost metaphysical religious impulses by those which Nature, as a visible emanation from the Godhead, in her universality, and her thousand-fold individualities, instils into every susceptible heart. Hence the profound depth, but also the cheerful efficiency, and certainly genuine religious influence, of these two works, which hitherto stand alone; hence the combined effect of the playful and detached passages, with the most noble and sincere feelings of gratitude produced by the whole; hence is it also that I individually could as little endure to lose in 'The Creation' and in 'The Seasons' the crowing of the cock, the singing of the lark, the lowing of the cattle, and the rustic glee of the peasants, as I could in Nature herself; in other words, 'The Creation' and 'The Seasons' are founded on nature and the visible service of God,—and are no new materials for music to be found there?"



X. A. v. A. Clofa



WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART.

ROCHLITZ has drawn a clever parallel between Raphael and Mozart, and it holds good throughout their lives. Two great men had begun to diffuse a new spirit over the age in which they flourished, and to exercise over their respective art a powerful and almost arbitrary dominion. Michael Angelo and Sebastian Bach are their names. Raphael became acquainted with Angelo's, and Mozart with Bach's, works. Both youths were so enraptured, that the one abandoned his former manner of painting, and the other his former manner of composing.

Both artists made similar use of their short but crowded life, and both felt, towards the age of thirty-five, a decline of their bodily strength, whilst their mental powers still increased their noble exertion, and thereby speeded the evil. Both felt the chilling hand of death, which already seized them, and tried still to raise them-

selves a monument for posterity. Both chose the Transfiguration, — Raphael that of the Redeemer, Mozart that of the Redeemed. With the zeal of those who already perceive themselves attended by the shades of death, and who feel that they perform their last work, both of them exerted themselves to the utmost, and produced, as it were, the quintessence of their most sacred feelings. Both these transfigurations transfigured our artists themselves. The work of Raphael became the first of new painting, and that of Mozart the first of new religious music.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was born at Salzburg, January the 27th, 1756, where his father, Leopold Mozart, was vice *Kapellmeister* to the archbishop. So extraordinary was the child's progress in everything appertaining to music, but especially in clavier playing, that so early even as 1762 his father made professional tours with little "Wofel" and his sister (five years older than himself) to Munich, Vienna, Paris, and London. Their reception was most cordial in all these cities, but especially in the latter, where they found a good friend in John Christian Bach, who, holding an appointment at court, had the means of introducing them to George III. Such wonder was excited by the precocious child, and such natural doubts were entertained of the verity of the stories related of him, that Daines Barrington, a well-known virtuoso, visited him for the purpose of testing his powers, and wrote an essay (printed in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society) describing his marvellous passage through the ordeal.



Mozart afterwards spent three years at Salzburg and Vienna in composing and studying the art of composition, during which time he attracted but little notice, — perhaps, even was purposely neglected, through the jealousy of rival artists. The juvenile composer, now thirteen years old, met with a warmer reception in Italy in 1770. Schlüter says, “Whatever could gratify the ambition of a gray-haired professor was freely bestowed on the ingenious lad, — the Papal Order, diplomas from the Philharmonic Academies of Bologna and Verona, the esteem of connoisseurs, and the adoration of the multitude. Mozart’s operas, ‘Mitridate, Rè di Ponto’ and ‘Lucio Silla,’ both of which he wrote for the Milan stage, where the former was performed under the youthful maestro’s leadership to the cries of ‘*Evviva il Maestrino*,’ were repeated no less than twenty times. It is scarcely necessary to add that these operas (quite of the traditional type), together with the later gala pieces, ‘Ascanio in Alba,’ ‘Il Sogno di Scipione,’ ‘Il Rè Pastore,’ and the German operettas ‘Bastien und Bastienne,’ ‘Zaide,’ and even the buffa opera, ‘La finta Giardiniera,’ — a more matured piece in regard to instrumentation and dramatic expression, — have no value and importance nowadays; but, as Jahn justly observes, the boy’s exquisite discernment of characteristic and national peculiarities in different branches of dramatic composition is evident in these pieces.”

The young composer’s brilliant career in Italy was succeeded by

several years of comparative quiet in his native town; but he soon became impatient of his position in this petty locality, which offered so small a field for his powers. After visiting several German cities he went to Paris. He was furnished with letters of recommendation to the influential, but was kept waiting in their anterooms, and was wearied and irritated by their broken promises and their unrecognition of his ability. He resorted to the drudgery of teaching for the support of himself and his mother (who accompanied him), and he gives in one of his letters a graphic description of the irksome task he had undertaken in endeavoring to instil into the mind of a young lady who had become one of his pupils the principles of composition. "Reduced as he then was," says a recent biographer, "to the necessity of working for his daily bread, and too proud to pander to the bad taste which then reigned in the French capital, he renounced altogether the idea which he once entertained of composing an opera for the theatre of Paris. He merely contented himself with occasionally playing some trifles at a concert, and the Parisian stage was thus deprived of the glory of being identified with the production of any of his great compositions."

Whilst Mozart was away from his native town, the Cathedral organist and the *Kapell-meister* both died; and it was not without some difficulty that his father was able to obtain the present grant of the first office for his son, and the promise of the latter, for which he was deemed too young, but which was to be reserved

for him. "Mozart's dislike to resume the old life of Salzburg was somewhat mitigated by the provision in his engagement, that he should have leave of absence to fulfil any contract he might obtain to write an opera for another town; and further, by his father's lively representation, that the salary he was now to receive was indispensable to relieve the family from the embarrassment in which the affairs of recent years had involved them."

Soon after the return of Mozart to his native city, he was gratified by what he had so long hoped — but hoped in vain — in Paris. He had an opportunity of composing an opera under high patronage, having received the commands of the Elector of Bavaria to that effect. It was under these circumstances that he wrote his "*Idomeneo*," which was brought out at Munich, and justified the high opinion which had been formed of its merits. "With this work," says Mr. Holmes, "the most important in its influence on music, Mozart crowned his twenty-fifth year. The score is still a picture to the musician. It exhibits consummate knowledge of the theatre, displayed in an opera of the first magnitude and complexity, which unites to a great orchestra the effects of a double chorus on the stage and behind the scenes, and introduces marches, processions, and dances in various accompaniments, in the orchestra, behind the scenes, or under the stage. This model opera, in which Mozart rises on the wing from one beauty to another through long acts, was completed within a few weeks, and ever since has defied the

scrutiny of musicians to detect in it the slightest negligence of style."

"Mozart's classical period," to use the words of Schlüter, "may be said to begin with 'Idomeneo,' the success of which (together with the consciousness of genius and respect for his calling) inspired him with the resolution of quitting the service of the coarse, uneducated Archbishop of Salzburg. He had, it is true, before this [1778 and 1779], endeavored, though unsuccessfully, to obtain an appointment either at Munich, Mannheim, or Paris. Mozart now settled in Vienna, 'in a private capacity,' gaining a livelihood by giving concerts, lessons, by professional tours, and such trifling sums as his compositions brought him in. It was not till the year 1787 that, with the title of Imperial Chamber Composer, an annuity of eight hundred florins was awarded him; and, on his death-bed, the appointment of *Kapellmeister* at St. Stephen's Cathedral."

The young artist's next great work was his "Entführung aus dem Serail." This charming opera, so full of sparkling melody and warmth of coloring, was composed under happy circumstances; Mozart was in love, and had plighted his love to Constance Weber, to whom he was ultimately married in the month of August, 1782. "This union was," to use the words of Mr. Hogarth, "the wisest act, as it was the happiest event of his life. Constance Weber was his guide, his monitress, his guardian angel. She regulated his domestic establishment, managed his affairs, was the cheerful companion

of his happier hours, and his never-failing consolation in sickness and despondency. He passionately loved her, and evinced his feeling by the most tender and delicate attentions."

It is impossible in this brief essay to follow in detail Mozart's artistic career. Our readers must be content with a few notices of the most important features.

"*Le Nozze di Figaro*," performed on the 1st of May, 1786, was composed in the short space of six weeks. Here Mozart's genius shines forth in full splendor. It was always regarded by the composer as one of his best productions. "*Don Giovanni*," produced in the following year, is, as Spohr justly remarks, the most energetic in character of all Mozart's operas. Goethe's "*Faust*" and Mozart's "*Don Giovanni*" may be regarded as the two greatest masterpieces of modern drama and modern music. "*Die Zauberflöte*" was produced at Vienna on September the 30th, 1791. It was performed one hundred times during the first year, and it spread the fame of the (meanwhile deceased) musician far and wide through Germany.

Mozart, the gifted heir of all hitherto available resources in musical art and science, was almost as great in sacred and instrumental as in dramatic composition; though, as Schlüter justly remarks, "historically, his importance in these branches of art—especially the former—is, comparatively speaking, inferior." Mozart himself did not prize his Masses highly; they were written under the depressing influence, and to please the superficial Italian taste of the Archbishop

of Salzburg. It was not till death was rife within him that he concentrated his whole attention on sacred composition, and drew the plan of that stupendous work, that sublimest production of modern art,—the “Requiem.”

Every one knows that while Mozart was engaged on the “Zauberflöte” he received an anonymous order for the “Requiem,” and, with death staring him in the face, had to hasten its completion, so that—similar to Raphael’s last work, the Transfiguration—it is not equally finished throughout. His pupil Süssmayer filled up, in accordance with Mozart’s instructions and posthumous sketches, the gaps that were left in the instrumentation and the last three numbers.

Mozart died, his last thoughts dwelling on the “Requiem,” on December the 5th, 1791, in the thirty-seventh year of his age, having been actively devoted to the pursuit of his art from early infancy. On the 4th of September, 1842,—more than fifty years after his death,—a bronze statue was erected to his memory at Salzburg; and, only a short time since, an allegorical monument (a weeping Muse placing the score of the “Requiem” on his other works) marks his supposed resting-place.





LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN.

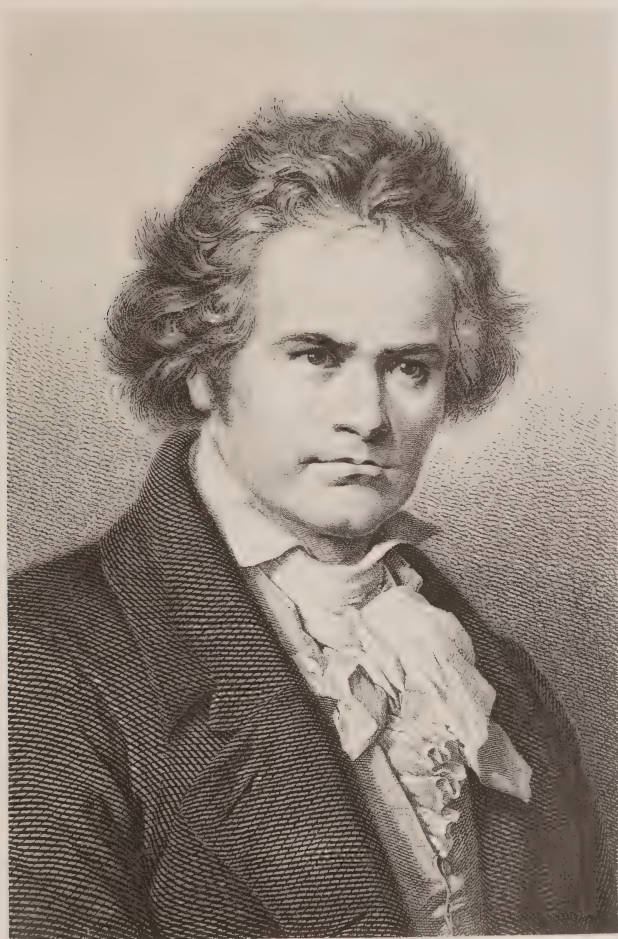


KNOWLEDGE of the lives and fortunes of great artists, it has been remarked, is interesting to those who regard their works with delight and admiration; and much light is thrown upon their genius and character as artists by the circumstances of their personal history, and an observation of their dispositions, habits, and character as men. Under this point of view there is no composer whose biography is more interesting than the illustrious subject of the present notice.

Ludwig von Beethoven was born at Bonn, December the 17th, 1770. It has been said upon respectable authority, and consequently often repeated, that he was a natural son of the King of Prussia; and at considerable pains he proved himself to be the lawful child of John Beethoven, a tenor singer in the chapel of the Electoral Prince in his native town. In early life he gave strong tokens of his wonderful musical organization. His father, hoping to improve the slender means of the family by the display of the child's ability,

was the first to undertake his musical training; but dissipation rendered him an unfit instructor. Young Beethoven was fortunately noticed by the Archduke Maximilian, at whose charge he received lessons of Van der Eder, the court organist, and, at his death, of his successor, Neefe. He progressed so rapidly that at eight years old he was able to play some of the most difficult fugues of Sebastian Bach. His three sonatas, written when he was ten years old, prove his early acquaintance with the principles of musical construction, and show a fluency of thought, and an originality remarkable in one so young.

At the age of fifteen he was appointed organist of the Electoral Chapel at Bonn, and soon afterwards, the Elector's chamber musician. When Haydn, returning from his first visit to London, passed through Bonn, the young musician showed him a cantata which he had written, and of which he desired the illustrious veteran's opinion. Haydn praised it highly, and advised the author to pursue a career which he had so well begun. Notwithstanding the favorable beginning of Beethoven's acquaintance with Haydn, their subsequent intercourse was less agreeable. Beethoven was sent by the Elector of Cologne to study under the greatest musician of the age; but they did not suit each other, and Haydn got rid of an untractable scholar by turning him over to Albrechtsberger. Haydn, it seems, desired that Beethoven should acknowledge himself as his pupil, and so describes him in his earliest publications. Beethoven refused, saying that to be sure he had got a few lessons from Haydn,



but had never learnt anything from him. When Beethoven had finished his first set of trios, he played them at Prince Lichnowsky's before a party of the principal musicians in Vienna. Haydn was present among the rest, and joined in the applause bestowed by the company on these charming productions. He, however, took the author aside, and advised him, most unaccountably, not to publish the third of the set, the well-known trio in C minor. Beethoven, who knew well that this was the best of the three, paid no respect to the advice; and when he found his own opinion confirmed by the judgment of the public, he conceived the notion, which never afterwards left him, that Haydn had been actuated by a spirit of jealous rivalry. This he never forgave, nor did he ever lose an opportunity of making Haydn and his music the subject of sarcastic remarks and criticisms.

Beethoven submitted to Albrechtsberger's authority with little more patience than to that of Haydn. This master was a profound theorist, and taught the science in all its scholastic rigor; a method of tuition quite unsuitable to the modern state of the art. It is easy to imagine the impetuous pupil forced to bend under the yoke of antiquated rules, which he felt to be mere pedantry, and was continually led by his ardent imagination to disregard. He was constantly, therefore, committing errors, which his teacher as constantly endeavored to correct. Hence many disputes and some squabbles, though the scholar never lost sight of the respect and esteem which he owed to his venerable instructor.

It was now that he took lessons, professedly in dramatic composition, of Salieri, his connection with whom is acknowledged in his first three violin sonatas. Whatever he may have expected, "he received lessons, but not instruction," from this fashionable composer of his day; for the grand dramatic power which marks his writing was not to be taught him, and the conventionalities of the lyric drama are totally absent from his few dramatic works.

Beethoven's unhappy malady, deafness, which so deeply affected his mind, and must have had no small influence on the character of his music, appears to have attacked him at an early age.

In the following interesting passage from one of his letters to Wegeler, dated Vienna, June, 1800, he says that his deafness had been gradually increasing for three years: "You desire to know something of my situation. Well, it is not so much amiss. During the last year, Lichnowsky, however incredible it may seem to you, has been a warm friend. If we have had any little misunderstandings, they have only served to strengthen our friendship. He has assigned me a pension of 600 florins (about £40 or £50 sterling) a year, which I can draw so long as I have not found a place that will suit me. I can find for every one of my works six or seven publishers, and more if I choose. They no longer think of cheapening my goods: I fix my price, and it is paid. This, you see, is a fine thing. For example, I find a friend in difficulty, and my purse does not enable me to assist him; but I have only to sit down to my desk, and I can help him immediately. I am living

more economically than formerly. Were I to make up my mind to remain here permanently, I should have a certain day allotted me every year for a concert. I have already had several; but, unhappily, the envious fiend, ill-health, has deranged the men on my chess-board; that is, my hearing has been getting weaker and weaker every day for these three years past."

"Beethoven's general habit of composition," says Mr. Macfarren, in his able biography of the master, "was to set down every idea as it occurred to him, and afterwards to amalgamate these into complete movements; he would even modify a phrase in many different forms upon paper, before he was satisfied to incorporate it into a work; and thus he employed his sketch-book, as Mozart did his memory, making it the crucible in which he moulded his creations into maturity. He frequently pondered in this manner for very long upon a composition, and would sometimes have several in progress at once; but, on the contrary, he would occasionally produce a work with the promptness of improvisation; and so when a lady at the opera lamented to him the loss of some favorite variations on the air 'Nel cor piu,' then being sung, he wrote his piece on this theme and sent it to her the following morning."

In 1802 Beethoven produced his celebrated "Mount of Olives," the first part, in fact, of a "Passions" oratorio. But the great musician did not excel in church music. Marx says, "Not only was Beethoven too much wanting in church feeling and sympathy for the composition of Masses, but he was not thoroughly at home in

choral writing, which, like every other branch of art, has its own peculiar conditions."

Beethoven's sole opera, "Fidelio," was produced in November, 1805, seven days after the entry of Napoleon's troops into Vienna. It met with a cold reception from an audience composed chiefly of French officers. After the third representation it was withdrawn from the stage. Fortunately for art the opera was subsequently revived, with certain alterations and additions, and met with that success which has stamped it as a standard work of the lyric stage. To describe the merits of this masterpiece would greatly surpass the present limits. In the words of the critic just quoted, "Its chief excellence lies in its all-powerful dramatic character, and the gradual growth of the intensity of its expression with the progress of the action; it is rendered difficult of comprehension to a general public by the minuteness of the expression, which necessitates in the hearers, not only a knowledge in the broad sentiment, but of the very words of the text, each one of which has its meaning illustrated in the music."

In 1809 King Jerome offered Beethoven the lucrative appointment of *Kapell-meister* at Cassel, but which his noble patrons at Vienna dissuaded him from accepting, and secured him an annuity of 4,000 florins, in order to retain him at Vienna. This sum (owing to the disordered state of Austrian finance) was, so soon even as 1811, reduced to one fifth its original value; but it had the effect of debarring Beethoven from undertaking duties which, with his

increasing infirmity, he would have been scarcely competent to fulfil, and thus he was left free to follow his own bent.

The last illness of this great man fell upon him in the autumn of 1826. His groundless fear of poverty caused him, during this period, endless anxiety, under which he wrote, through Moscheles, to the London Philharmonic Society requesting pecuniary assistance; and to the lasting credit of this institution be it recorded, he received an immediate order for £100 sterling. He died, after several hours' insensibility, on the 26th of March, 1827. He was interred at Währing, a village near Vienna, with great solemnity, all the musicians of the city assisting in the funeral rites, which were witnessed by a concourse of many thousand persons.

We cannot conclude this brief sketch better than by quoting what the German critic Krause says of the great composer: "Beethoven has taken up musical art at that point where Haydn and Mozart left it; he adopted the manner of those great masters, but developed and improved it till it became absolutely transformed by his genius. In especial did he carry orchestral music a step farther, — as far, indeed, as is possible with our present means and methods of art. He has, likewise, the great merit of having developed the resources of piano-forte music, and enriched it with all the magnificence and power of which it was susceptible. But it is in grand orchestral music that his chief merit lies. Those splendid descriptive symphonies, the 'Pastorale' and the 'Eroica,' exhibit an intellectual depth and force such as had never before been revealed in music.

What the opera is to music in general, Beethoven's symphonies are to the rest of instrumental music. In these matchless compositions, the several instruments seem possessed with one leading idea, which, conjointly with the rest, is taken up and worked out by each according to its own peculiar tone and character; no two of the parts are alike, yet all, as it were, intimately related, and inspired with the same sentiment, combine to produce the loveliest effects. All the ingredients of the orchestra, from the larger and more imposing masses to the smaller groups, as well as all the instruments severally, conduce to unity of effect in such a manner that their own individual significance is thereby enhanced. More especially are these masterpieces remarkable for the admirably maintained balance between string and wind instruments, and for the bold, vigorous treatment of the basses. Extreme richness in the instrumentation in no way precludes clearness and precision; that is, with a well-proportioned orchestra of which the execution (especially as regards expression) is unimpeachable, and an audience composed of those who, by a due course of study and attention to musical works of a high order, have qualified themselves for the comprehension and enjoyment of such noble and profound emanations as have never before found expression in musical art. But even the less cultivated lover of music is fascinated and enthralled by these majestic compositions, though he may not fathom their deeper meaning."



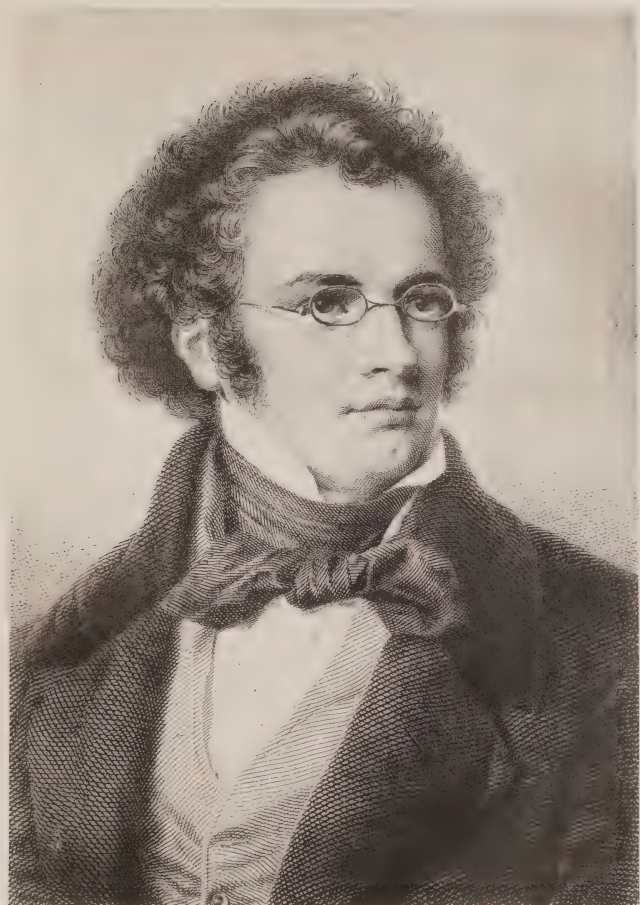


FRANZ SCHUBERT.

HIS works of this great composer have scarcely yet emerged from obscurity; his fame has not yet reached its summit. The circumstances of his career are brief and uneventful, and present few salient points which the biographer can make so many centres of interest. To use Schindler's words, "We do not meet in Schubert's life with mountain or valley, but only a level plain over which he moves with an invariably steady and equal step. The evenness of his disposition, too, which resembled the smooth surface of a mirror, was with difficulty ruffled by external matters, his spirits and actions were in complete harmony with each other. It must be confessed that his days glided away as well befitted the life of a citizen, born in poverty and dying in poverty."

The parents of Franz Schubert were from Austrian Silesia; the family came to Vienna and settled in the parish of Lichenthal, where

the subject of the present notice was born, January the 31st, 1797. His father was the schoolmaster of his native village, and knew enough of music to teach its first elements to his three sons. In 1804 Franz was placed under the tuition of Michael Holzer, the cantor of Lichenthal, who, appreciating his singular gifts, interested himself to procure his admission, as a singing boy, into the Imperial School at Vienna, whence he passed into the choir of the Imperial Chapel, in 1811. He kept this appointment till his voice broke, some two years later. The pupils of the school to which young Franz was attached had formed amongst themselves a small orchestra, and met almost daily to perform the symphonies of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and once a week had a concert at which vocal and instrumental solos, quartets, etc., were given. For these meetings Schubert composed his first works, which were poured forth with great rapidity, greatly to the detriment of his other studies. During this time he practised the piano-forte and the violin, and acquired such proficiency on the latter, that he was permitted to lead the band of the chapel at rehearsals, in the absence of the chief violinist. Ruzieka, the court organist, taught him harmony, and Salieri gave him lessons in singing and composition. When he quitted the school and the Imperial chapel, he was seventeen years of age. He made his first start in life as assistant teacher at his father's school; a drudgery which he endured for three years, during which time he found leisure to write a mass, more than a hundred songs, operas,



operettas, symphonies, etc. His power of production was remarkable, but his carelessness about what he wrote was almost as great as his fertility.

"In this period," remarks Madam Macfarren (in an interesting notice of Schubert, prefixed to her edition of his "Fair Maid of the Mill"), "falls the composition of the 'Erl King,' perhaps the most perfect piece of vocal declamation ever written. A second reading of the poem sufficed to suggest the music as it stands now. This and some settings of other poems of Goethe he sent to the great poet, who probably, in the mass of his correspondence, overlooked the offering of the unknown musician. At all events Schubert received no word of recognition from Goethe, and it was not till long afterwards, when Schubert had been dead two years, that Goethe heard the marvellous setting of his 'Erl King' efficiently sung, and was able to appreciate its value."

Schubert's opera of "Die Zwillinge" was produced at the Court Theatre in Vienna, June 14th, 1820, and his melodrama with choruses, "Die Zauberharpe," was given on the 19th of August in the same year. These were preceded by "Der Spiegelritter" and "Das Teufelslustschloss," the dramas by Kotzebue; and "Claudine von Villa Bella," the drama by Goethe; "Die Freunde von Salamanca," "Don Fernand," and "Der vierjährige Posten" appear also to have been written before Schubert completed his twenty-third year, but not to have been publicly performed. In 1822 Schubert composed

the grand opera, in three acts, of "Alphons und Estrella"; he wrote choruses for the drama of "Rosamunde," which was performed in 1823; and the one-act opera "Die Verschworenen" (first printed in 1862) was written in 1824, as was also the grand opera of "Fierabras," which he considered his best composition for the stage. Fétis names two other dramatic works of Schubert; and he left three operas unfinished. He composed several masses, and set some of the psalms and other portions of the Romish service; he wrote twelve symphonies, of which several have been played in London; and the number of his quartets for string instruments; trios for piano-forte, violin, and violoncello; sonatas, fantasias, and other pieces for the piano-forte, in almost every variety of form, — can scarcely be estimated, since, even up to the present date, some hitherto unknown products of his genius are from time to time being brought before the world. Schubert also composed some cantatas, among which "Prometheus" is specially admired; and a large number of four-part songs.

But perhaps Schubert is best known by his numerous songs ("Lieds"), so rich in harmony and profound expression, so full of charming variety, — sorrow, joy, love, melancholy. Embodying as they do the poet's thoughts in sweet and vocal strains, they raised ballad music to one of the highest branches of vocal composition. As Schlüter says, "Schubert's songs — next to Beethoven's sonatas — represent the completion of modern musical art; they are the key-

stone to the edifice commenced about a hundred years previously. Oratorio, opera, and symphony had reached their apogee in Handel, Mozart, Beethoven; it remained for Schubert to complete the grand series of choric works by that branch of musical art which appeals more particularly to individual sentiment, and provides for him who, wearied and disgusted with the ignoble elements which, alas, too frequently degrade the musical profession, turns to the privacy of home, and seeks refreshment and solace in what may, in truth, be called 'fireside' music. 'Franz Schubert,' says the poet Mayrhofer (Schubert's friend and companion), 'was my good genius, who faithfully escorted me through life with melodies suited to every occasion, whether of trouble, peace, change, anxiety, sorrow, or joy.' Beethoven himself, during his last days on earth, keenly relished Schubert's songs; and Jean Paul requested to hear the 'Erl King' once more before he died."

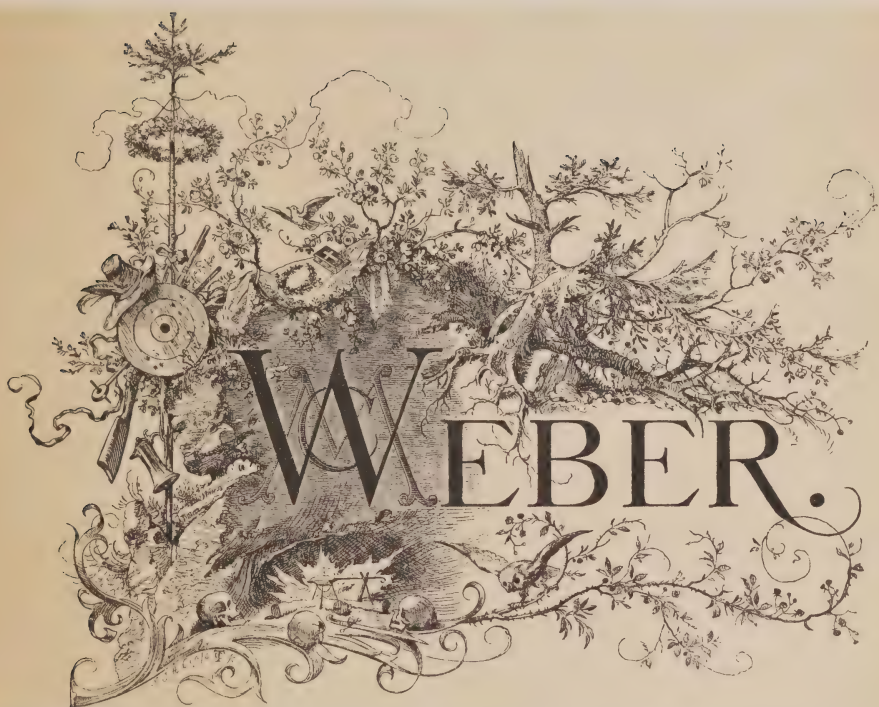
But little more remains to tell. "A desultory irregular life Schubert's seems to have been, harassed by poverty and constant disappointments, cherished by an enthusiastic but uninfluential circle, taking pleasure in short country rambles in the environs of Vienna, in convivial gatherings, and above all, in his unrelaxing productiveness. In 1827 his health began to give way, but an excursion that he made into Styria gave him new vigor; on his return he entered upon the composition of his great symphony, in C, which, though pronounced 'impracticable' during his lifetime, has been accepted

as a standard work ever since its rediscovery by Schumann in 1839, and its performance under Mendelssohn at the *Leipziger Gewandhaus* Concerts immediately afterwards. Schubert's recovery was of brief duration; he sickened again, and died after a short illness, November the 19th, 1828. He was interred at the Währing church-yard, close to the grave of Beethoven, according to his earnest wish."

Schumann's opinion of this composer is characteristic: "If fecundity is a proof of genius, Schubert is one of the greatest. He would probably in time have set the whole of German literature to music. Whatever he tried, broke forth into music; Æschylus, Klopstock (so difficult to compose), yielded to his touch, yet he discovered unexpected depth in W. Müller's simple verses. Schubert will ever be a favorite with the young; he has that for which they most sympathize, — ardent affections, bold imagination, vigorous action; he tells them that which they like best, — tells them of strange adventures, maidens, love affairs; he is by no means devoid of wit and humor, but never allows these qualities to destroy the tender impression of his music. At the same time, he excites the imagination as no other, except Beethoven, has ever done. We find reminiscences of Beethoven in his music; but had Beethoven never existed, Schubert would still have been the same, though his peculiar bent might perhaps have been longer in declaring itself. Compared to Beethoven, Schubert is a feminine character, — more talkative,

gentler, tenderer. True, he has powerful movements, nor is he wanting in breadth and vigor; he is as a gentle entreating woman beside a commanding masculine character, — though only in comparison to Beethoven. Compared to others, he is masculine enough; for he is the most vigorous and original of modern composers."







CARL MARIA VON WEBER.

THE great composer who follows in due sequence in our "Gallery" is one whose fancy loved to wander in the regions of enchantment, and to embody the strange and fantastic images of German superstition. He gloried in delineating the wild and savage aspects of nature, and in dwelling, like Beethoven, on her sullen and more gloomy recesses.

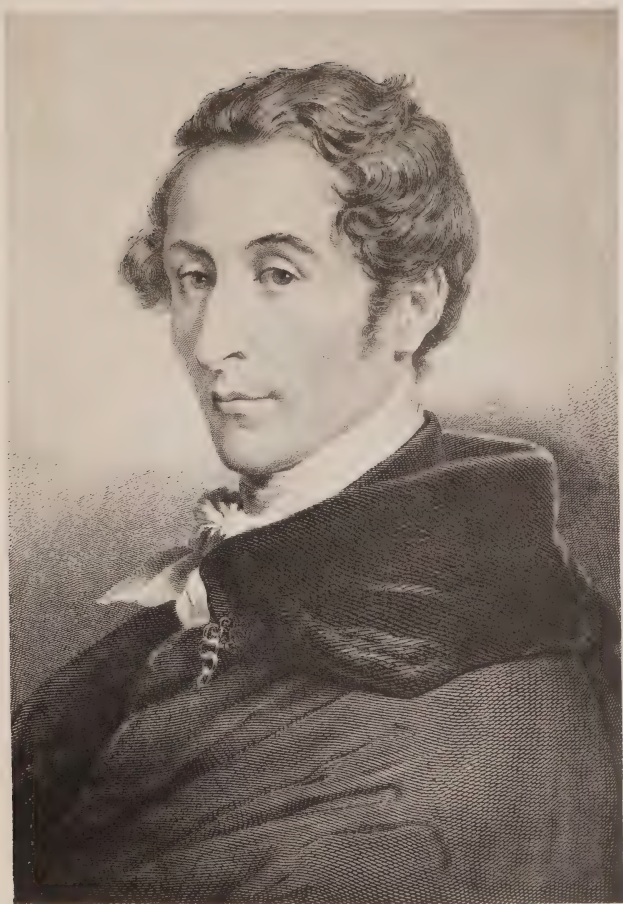
Carl Maria von Weber was born on the 18th of November, 1786, at Eutin, a small town in Holstein. His father, who was a violinist of some skill, gave him a liberal education, and enabled him to cultivate his talents for music and painting, between which his inclinations seem, in his early years, to have been divided. His ardor in the study of painting, however, abated as his mind became more and more engrossed by his love of music. The first regular instruction he received on the piano-forte was from Heuschkel at Hildburghausen, in 1796, and it was to this severe and learned master

that Weber owed his energy, distinctness, and execution on the instrument. The more his father perceived the gradual development of his talents, the more anxious he was to sacrifice everything to their cultivation: he therefore took his son to the famous Michael Haydn (brother to the more celebrated genius) at Salzburg. Owing to the austere manners of this master, young Weber profited but little by his instruction. "There was too awful a distance," Weber himself says, "between the old man and the child."

At this time, in 1798, his first work was published, consisting of six "Fughetti," or short fugues, which were favorably noticed by the "Leipsic Musical Gazette." In the same year he went to Munich, where he received instruction from Kalcher, the organist of the Royal Chapel, to whom he ascribes his knowledge of the laws of counterpoint, and their ready application to practice. Under the eye of this master he composed an opera, a grand mass, and many instrumental pieces; all which were afterwards committed to the flames.

Weber always had an inclination for drawing; and when, in 1799, Sennefelder published his discovery of lithography, the young musical student was greatly attracted by it, threw his whole energy for a time into its investigation, and devised some modifications of the process, which he fancied would entitle him to rank with the original inventor. He soon wearied, however, of this pursuit, and returned with renewed ardor to his musical studies.

At the age of fourteen he composed the opera "Das Waldmäd-



chen" (The Maid of the Wood), which was performed for the first time in November, 1800, and received with applause at Vienna, Prague, and Petersburg. The whole of the second act was composed in ten days,—"one of the unfortunate consequences," he himself says, and the remark is worthy of being attended to, "of those marvellous anecdotes of celebrated men which act so strongly on the youthful mind, and incite to emulation." After this he was induced, by reading an article in a musical journal, to think of composing in an ancient style, and of reviving the use of forgotten instruments. According to this plan he composed an opera called "*Peter Schmoll und seine Nachbarn*" (Peter Schmoll and his Neighbors), which had little success, but received the warm approbation of his old master, Michael Haydn.

Soon afterwards he visited Vienna, and mingled in the musical society of that city. He became acquainted with the Abbé Vogler, a learned and profound musician, who generously undertook to give him the benefit of his own knowledge and experience. Aided by the advice and assistance of Vogler, Weber for two years devoted himself to a severe study of the works of the great masters, and during this period published only one or two trifles. After having finished this course of education, he was appointed to the situation of *Kapellmeister* at Breslau. During his residence there he composed an opera called "*Rübezahl*"—Number-Nip, the celebrated spirit, or fiend, of the Hartz Mountains.

The commencement of the great Prussian war, in 1806, obliged him to quit his post at Breslau, and he entered the service of the Duke Eugene, of Würtemberg. Here he wrote two symphonies, several concertos, and various pieces for wind instruments. He also brought out at this time an improved edition of his opera, "The Maid of the Wood," under the title of "Silvana"; a cantata, "Der erste Ton"; some overtures for a grand orchestra; and a great many solo pieces for the piano-forte. In 1810 he composed the opera of "Abu Hassan," at Darmstadt. This piece, which is founded on a well-known and amusing story in the "Arabian Nights," had considerable success. The tale is well dramatized, and the music light and comic. It was brought out in London, and has been frequently performed.

During the following year Weber visited the chief capitals of Germany, increasing his reputation as a player; and in 1813 he was appointed director of the opera at Prague, with the charge of organizing a new orchestra. It was now that he composed his four-part songs for male voices, to Körner's patriotic series of poems, "Leier und Schwert," which had an immense popularity, and not a little political influence, and were the first things that brought their composer's name into general repute. In 1815 he produced his cantata, "Kampf und Sieg," in celebration of the battle of Waterloo. He gave up his post in 1816, and then spent two years at Berlin, where he wrote three of his piano-forte sonatas. In 1818 he was

engaged to share with Morlacchi the office of *Kapell-meister* in the Court Theatre at Dresden; Weber having the direction of the German operas, and his coadjutor of the Italian. One of his first duties in this appointment was, to compose a mass in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of the accession of the King of Saxony, and his well-known Jubilee Overture was written for the same occasion.

The melodrama of "*Preciosa*," with Weber's music, was brought out at Berlin on March the 14th, 1820, and it is still a standard work on the German stage. The various attempts, however, to adapt it to the French and English stage failed, notwithstanding the beauty and romantic character of the music. The 18th of June, 1821, was rendered notable in the annals of dramatic music by the first performance of "*Der Freischütz*," to the enormous success of which opera, and its great influence upon the art, Weber mainly owes his high reputation. "Nothing but '*Der Freischütz*,'" says a recent historian, "was performed in any theatre in Germany, and nothing but the airs from it were heard even in the streets of the smallest village. In July, 1824, an English version of it was produced in London, at the English Opera House, and fully gratified the highly raised expectations of the public."

In November, 1823, the opera of "*Euryanthe*" was produced at Vienna, and received as warmly as the "*Der Freischütz*" had been. The applause was enthusiastic, and the composer was four times called upon the stage during the first performance. The story,

though it wants the attractions of *diablerie*, is interesting, and resembles that of Shakespeare's "Cymbeline"; and the music, though not capable of immediately striking the popular ear, makes a profound impression when the performers have surmounted the great difficulties of its execution.

Weber arrived in London on the 6th of March, 1826, for the purpose of superintending the preparation and bringing out of his opera of "Oberon," which had been written for him by Mr. Planché. It was first played on the 12th of April, and the hopes of the entire season were frustrated by its indifferent reception, "which," says Mr. Macfarren, "must be mainly ascribed to the utter absence of dramatic effect and musical suggestiveness in the *libretto*." It was, however, given with success in Germany and France.

Weber was now, though neither himself nor those about him seem to have been fully aware of it, in the last stage of the fatal malady under which he had long labored. It was a pulmonary disease, which had been aggravated by the fatigues of a long journey, and the severity of a climate to which he was unaccustomed. His whole thoughts were now turned towards his home, and his impatience to be once more in the bosom of his family was extreme. Alas! this hope was destined never to be realized. On the morning of the 5th of June, Weber was found dead in his bed. He was interred with great solemnity in the Roman Catholic Chapel, Moorfields; and in 1842 his remains were exhumed by his son, and removed to Dresden.

A statue was made by the able hand of Rietschel. It was inaugurated on the 11th of October, 1860, with much municipal and artistic pomp and ceremony, in presence of the royal family and diplomatic corps. The statue stands upon the open space before the theatre at Dresden.

“Thus,” to use the words of his son (Baron Max Maria von Weber), “ends the story of the life of one who had caused hearts to beat in sympathy from pole to pole. It has shown the influence of the world without upon the workings of the genius within. As child, his spirit already rose above the reckless inspirations of the wild stroller’s life around him. As youth, he struggled against impressions, still more harmful, nigh beaten sometimes, but still rescuing his genius from the slough into which evil example might have plunged it, with the longing always at his heart for home, domestic hearth, and pure, true love. As master, he trod on his conscientious course in duty to himself and to his art, unheeding the allurements of false fame, fighting against painful humiliations, — a martyr for the true cause. In the hearts of the people he found his truest acknowledgment; and German feeling and Weber’s songs are now bound in indissoluble bonds together. But the martyrdom ends, and the poor martyr finds his rest in death. To the last his unfailing device in all had been, ‘Be it as God will.’”





FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY.

BOET, painter, scholar, and musician, the subject of the present notice takes the highest rank among the intellectual men of the present century. His music has exercised a powerful influence upon the progress of the art, and our young musicians, especially of England, owe to him a debt of gratitude which will take generations to repay.

Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy was the son of a rich merchant and banker, at Hamburg, and was born in that city on the 3d of February, 1809. He was the grandson of Moses Mendelssohn, a light of philosophy and science, as well as one of the most brilliant expositors of Jewish literature.

The early development of the musical faculty in the young Felix Mendelssohn forces him into a comparison with the precocious Mozart; but his more fortunate position saved him from the many evils resulting from the premature drudgery of public display.

His earliest musical instructor was the natural guardian of his infancy,—his mother; and on his father removing to Berlin, when Felix was but four years old, the child was placed under the charge of another lady, Madame Bigot, to whose affectionate care Mendelssohn was always proud to own his obligation. After a time he was placed under the tuition of Berger for the piano-forte, and Zelter for composition. The rapidity of his progress under both these masters was extraordinary, — under the latter, marvellous.

He made his first public appearance as a pianist in 1817, when he played Dussek's "Military Concerto." At the beginning of May, 1821,—he had but recently completed his twelfth year,—Jules Benedict went to see him, and found him at work upon his first published piano-forte Quartet (that in C minor), which he waited to finish before he would join his visitor at a game in the garden. Zelter, in his correspondence with Goethe, wrote with rapture of the astonishing powers of his young pupil. The great poet philosopher was so warmly interested by the enthusiasm of the young musician that he invited him to Weimar in November, 1821, and verified by his own observation all that had been told him of the wonderful boy.

Felix had composed several works for the piano; but it was not till in 1824 that he appeared as a writer before the public. In that year were published two Quartets, for violin, tenor, violoncello, and piano (op. 1), the young author being then not fifteen years old.



These were followed by a grand Duo in F minor, for piano and violin; a Quartet in B minor; and several other works.

His opera "Die Hochzeit des Camacho" was publicly performed at Berlin in this year, and received with applause. It was, however, deprecated by the journals, which occasioned its withdrawal from the theatre, and planted in Mendelssohn a dislike for Berlin which never wore away.

Before his father would allow Felix to devote himself to music as his profession, he took him to Paris to consult the then aged Cherubini. The ordeal proposed by that consummate musician to test the proficiency of the aspirant was the composition of a Kyrie for chorus and full orchestra, which was accomplished to the perfect satisfaction of the renowned judge. This decision it was which gave to the world its future Mendelssohn. Animated by this encouragement, he resumed his studies under his former esteemed masters, and successively produced the works from op. 5 to op. 12; besides several Quartets and an Octet.

In the month of November, 1826, the well-known composer and pianist, Moscheles, paid a visit to Berlin, and whilst there had the pleasure of listening to Mendelssohn's Overture to the "Midsummer Night's Dream," played as a duet on the piano-forte by the young author and his sister Fanny, afterwards Madame Hensel.

During the years 1827 and 1828 he prosecuted his classical education at the University of Berlin; and while there he made a metrical

version of Terence's "Andria" (the first that had been written in the German language), which he sent as a present to Goethe.

In April, 1829, Mendelssohn made his first visit to England. "Hitherto," to borrow Mr. Macfarren's words, "his rare talents were little known beyond the limited though wide circle of his father's connection, and it is from their public recognition in London that his universal reputation is first to be dated." His performance of Mozart's Concerto in D minor, with extempore cadences, and the production of his own Symphony in C minor, both at concerts of the Philharmonic Society, drew forth the wondering praises of all musicians. The public performances of the immortal Overture to a "Midsummer Night's Dream" finally laid the key-stone of its author's reputation.

In the beginning of August following he made an extensive tour in Scotland, with his friend Klingemann, "drawing, composing, and feeding his fancy amid its romantic scenery. They went first to Edinburgh, then to Perth, Blair-Athol, Loch Tay, to the island of Staffa, and Fingal's Cave; then southwards, by Glasgow and Loch Lomond, visiting the Cumberland Lakes and Liverpool,—a journey fraught with valuable influences on a cultivated and poetical mind like Mendelssohn's. The splendid Overture to 'Fingal's Cave' was the only immediate result of these impressions; but even the greatest of his instrumental works, the Symphony in A minor, though not completed until fourteen years later, may be said to have had

its origin in the sombre inspirations of ancient Holyrood, as beheld in the still gloom of evening."

In the autumn of 1830 Mendelssohn went to Italy. He was in Rome from November till the following April, and there composed two of his most important works, — the setting of Goethe's "First Walpurgis Night" and the "Reformation Symphony." He passed some time at Naples, and visited Venice, imbibing inspirations from all that was beautiful around him, and winning friends in each city. He then made a sojourn in Switzerland, "delighting as fully in the wonders of nature which met him there at every turn as he had done in the glories of art, when ranging through the ruins and galleries of Italy."

"In 1834," says M. Fétis, "I found him again at Aix-la-Chapelle, whither he had betaken himself on the occasion of the Musical Fête of the Pentecost. He was then twenty-five years of age; his former youthful timidity had given place to the assurance of the acknowledged artist, and even to a certain air of *hauteur*." Until 1836 he continued to direct the Fêtes at Düsseldorf and Cologne, and in 1835 he accepted the office of conductor of the celebrated *Gewandhaus* concerts at Leipsic.

Mendelssohn lost his beloved father, after a short illness, on the 19th of November, 1835. His grief on this occasion was profound. He left Leipsic immediately, and remained for some time with his mother and relatives, secluded from the world; but in the midst

of this trouble he had moral strength and self-control enough to work upon and conclude his great work, "St. Paul," begun the year before at Düsseldorf. The first performance of this oratorio took place on the 22d of May, 1836, at the latter city. It was performed in England, for the first time, at a festival at Liverpool in October of the same year.

In the summer of 1836 Mendelssohn went to Frankfort to take the duties of his friend Schelble, who was ill, as conductor of the Cecilia Vocal Society. It was then that his marriage was decided upon with Mlle. Cecilie Jean Renaud, a lady of a good Frankfort family, and which took place in the spring of 1837.

Mendelssohn's subsequent career was unhappily but too brief. In 1846 he completed, and on the 26th of August himself conducted, at the Birmingham Festival, the oratorio of "Elijah," the reception of which left his warmest friends nothing to desire. But it was in the decrees of that unsearchable Providence which often only shows us the highly gifted, —

"To mock our fond pursuits,
And teach our humbled hopes that life is vain,"

that this star, the cynosure of all observers, should stoop to the horizon before it had reached its culminating point. During his last visit to England the keen eye of anxious friendship might trace the secret ravages which the ethereal spirit within had made upon

his delicately organized frame. This great musician died at Leipsic on the 6th of November, 1847.

Thus, at the age of thirty-eight, passed away a most remarkable man. In some sort he may be compared with Mozart, who died in his thirty-sixth year. But it cannot be said of the latter that he died prematurely. His faculty was developed with amazing rapidity; and from the very early age at which he began to hold a place in public estimation, his artistic life was by no means short. Although a painful apprehension to the contrary imbittered his last days, yet he lived long enough for fame. Not so with Mendelssohn. However extended his mortal span might have been, his fine talent would have continued, in all probability, to unfold and discover fresh beauties as long as his natural faculties were perfect. He died in the period of full promise, withered in the spring-time of his genius.





SCHUMANN.



ROBERT SCHUMANN.

A PART from his musical abilities, this composer has a claim upon our notice as one of the most intellectual musical critics of Germany. As a musician he has been extolled to the highest by his countrymen, and a comparison has been instituted between Mendelssohn and Schumann, greatly to the disadvantage of the latter. To be second to Mendelssohn is no trifling distinction, and, however opinions may now differ, eventually Schumann will take his proper place among the great musicians who have worked successfully in enlarging the resources of their art.

Robert Schumann was born at Zwickau, in Saxony, on the 8th of June, 1810. His father was a bookseller, and also a man of letters, having translated the poems of Byron into German, and produced some original works. He was not distinguished in his early youth for any particular talent, and indeed was rather backward in

all his studies. He was taught music at school, according to the custom of the country, but his parents did not encourage the pursuit of this art.

In 1819 he visited Carlsbad on account of his health, and here it was that he heard Moscheles play. This gave him an impetus and fixed his attention to music, which he chose as his profession. His father dying in 1826, when the young enthusiast was but sixteen years old, his mother became the sole arbitress of Schumann's career. According to her wish he went to Leipsic, in 1828, to study jurisprudence, and he proceeded thence to Heidelberg the year following, where at the Students' Concert he made his only public performance on the piano-forte.

His love of the art was increased at this time by a short visit to Italy. While at Leipsic he had studied the piano-forte under Wieck, the father of his future wife, who succeeded, after many efforts, in persuading Schumann's mother to withdraw her objection to his adopting music as a profession. His father bequeathed him such a competence as rendered him independent of the drudgery of his craft; thus, as one of his biographers remarks, "he had never to toil as a teacher, but could devote his entire energies to the cultivation and the exercise of his artistic powers."

He practised the piano with untiring energy; but in endeavoring to strengthen the third finger of his right hand, he sprained it in such a way that he was forever disabled from playing in public. After



this accident he devoted himself to composition, and soon attracted general attention by his works, which were novel and original, but of a difficulty which prevented them from becoming popular.

Schumann early displayed a taste for literature. Byron and J. P. Richter were his favorite authors, the works of the latter exercising a great influence upon his character.

In 1831 he commenced the study of composition under H. Dorn, afterwards *Kapell-meister* in Berlin, who was his only theoretical instructor; and three years later, in conjunction with several friends, he started the publication (at Leipsic) of the "*Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*," intended to promote the development of the romantic school. "This excellent paper," says Herr Pauer, "was received with general approbation, and essays on new music, unknown composers, and art in general were never written with more conscientiousness, enthusiasm, and impartiality.

"The mental infirmity which gave the saddest color to the last years of Schumann's life was a hereditary disease,—his eldest sister having lost her reason, and other members of his family having been to a greater or less extent similarly afflicted. His first attack was in the autumn of 1833, immediately induced, it is supposed, by grief for the death of his brother's wife. During this aberration he was rescued from throwing himself out of his bedroom window on the fourth story, the memory of which escape was such a ceaseless source of terror to him, that he never afterwards would sleep in a room above the ground-floor."

During the years 1838 and 1839 he wrote and published many works; as he grew older his music developed a most decided individuality, and the boldness and strangeness of his compositions have caused his genius to be as earnestly denied by some as it is enthusiastically admired by others.

In 1840, the year of his marriage, Schumann applied to the University of Jena for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, offering to write either a literary essay or a musical composition as the preliminary exercise. The university, however, dispensed with this form, content to grant him the diploma in acknowledgment of the works he had already brought before the world.

He quitted Leipsic in 1844, giving up his journal, the "*Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*," to undertake the direction of a vocal society at Dresden, rendered vacant by the removal of Ferdinand Hiller to Cologne. From Dresden he went, in 1850, to Düsseldorf, to fill the post of music director; "but whatever his other talents," remarks Mr. Macfarren, "he had never any qualifications for a conductor, and his inefficiency for the office increased with the rapid growth of his fatal malady, to such an extent that his band, who idolized him on his first arrival, at last refused, as a body, to play under him."

He made a professional visit with Madame Schumann to Russia, and another to Holland, both of which tours were attended with success and profit.

Poor Schumann's disease had now increased to the utmost; "he

was haunted," says his biographer, "by the imaginary sound of one single note, from which he never could free himself, and which became his perpetual torment. A peculiar phase of nervous irritability made him suppose all musical performances to be too quick, and this groundless fancy caused him such painful excitement, that at last he could not bear to hear music at all." He was subject to fits of silent abstraction; and though he liked to have his friends near him, he would sometimes pass hours in their society without uttering a word. On the 27th of February, 1854, he had been thus seated for some time, when he quietly left his companions, and quitting home unobserved he threw himself into the river, whence he was saved by some boatmen. This mournful event rendered it imperative to place him under restraint, and he was accordingly moved to an asylum at Endenich; there at his request he was provided with a piano-forte, playing on which he amused himself with most incoherent rhapsodies. He never regained his sanity, and died on the 29th of July, 1856.

"Schumann's works," to quote the words of Schlüter, "correspond to his career and education. He struggled through the 'storm period' — as he himself called the period of preparation and transition from one career to another — and attained to maturity in an incredibly short space of time. The latter period of his active life, from about 1847, bears a general resemblance to the first; partly in the restless and occasionally fantastic imagination, and partly

in the over-intellectual tendency which it displays. These characteristics are evident in his first piano-forte compositions, 'Papillions,' 'Davidsbündlertanze,' 'Carneval,' and to some extent even in 'Kreisleriana.' In these pieces Schumann is as unartistic and devoid of form as his favorite poet, Jean Paul; like him, he has an insurmountable antipathy to commonplace, every-day life; and like him, is forever taking refuge in the ideal. The 'Kinderscenen,' 'Fantasiestücke,' 'Waldscenen,' etc., are carefully finished as regards form; and in their graceful characteristic superscriptions we perceive the practical mind of the composer, — albeit this kind of poetic miniature-painting affords but little satisfaction to the real musician."

"In proportion," says Ambrose, "as his apprehension of the nature and object of music became clearer and deeper, in proportion as he endeavored to write good music without making wit, poetry, etc., his foremost aim, Schumann's music improved in vigor and originality. The two *allegro* movements of his 'First Symphony in B flat' teem with youthful vigor and vivacity; the terse, short rhythms in the first *allegro* of the 'Second Symphony in C' remind one of the same kind of thing in Beethoven (the first *allegro* movements of the fifth and eighth symphonies); and the *finale* of the splendid 'Piano-forte Quartet' is as healthy and joyous as some of old Sebastian Bach's quick, vigorous movements."

To the classical but brief period of Schumann's career, extending from 1841 to 1846, belong likewise: the Overture, scherzo, and

finale, — a kind of small symphony in three movements; to which the fantastically constructed “Symphony in E flat major,” with five movements, forms a curious contrast; the extremely difficult but fine piano-forte “Concerto in A minor”; the grand and brilliant “Piano-forte Quintet in E flat”; the quartets for bowed instruments (op. 41), and the cantata “Das Paradies und die Peri,” composed in 1843. The latter work, founded upon an episode in Moore’s well-known poem, “Lalla Rookh,” is the longest work of its author. The music is, for the most part, characterized by all the peculiarities of the composer, — constant changes of rhythm, unexpected progress of harmony, and original cadences. If it has little of the popular element, it possesses considerable interest for the musician. The critics consider that Mendelssohn’s influence contributed in no small degree to the improvement observable in Schumann’s later compositions.







JACOB MEYERBEER.

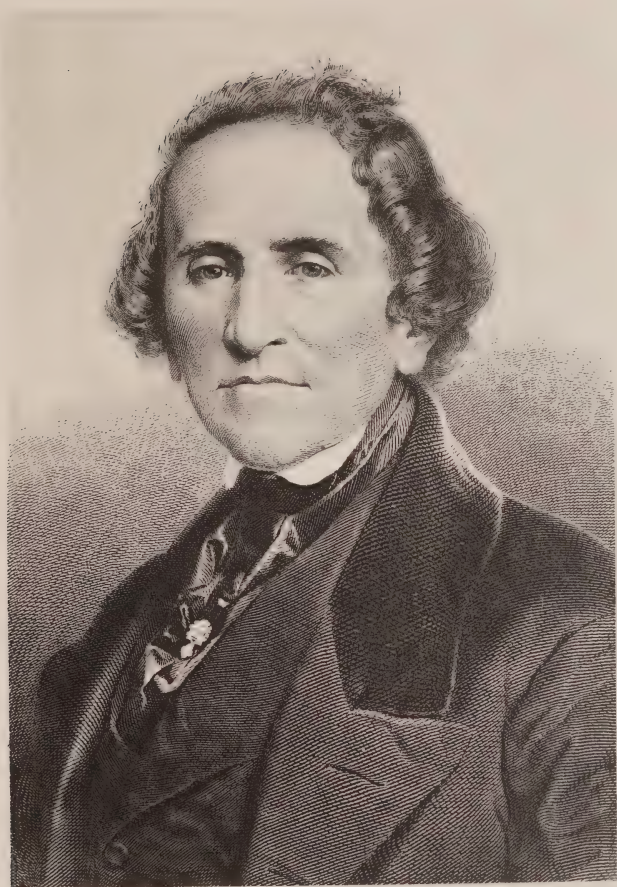
AT the head of his style of musical art, Meyerbeer may be said to have founded the school to which he belongs. The science and musical knowledge of the Germans, the sentimental sweetness of the Italians, and the scenic effects and taste of the French nation, are all combined in his later productions. Powerful dramatic feeling and originality of melody, added to the qualifications just mentioned, render his operas among the most fascinating works of the present lyric stage.

Jacob (better known as Giacomo) Meyerbeer was born at Berlin, September the 5th, 1794. His father, Jacques Beer, a rich banker, gave him an excellent education. His brothers, Wilhelm the astronomer, and Michael the dramatic poet, were both distinguished in their respective callings. Meyerbeer's disposition towards music manifested itself at an early age. A rich friend of the family, named

Meyer, in admiration of the young musician's genius and character, bequeathed to him a considerable fortune on condition that he added to the name of Beer that of the testator: hence the name by which his fame is known, with the Italian prefix Giacomo, assumed during his tour in Italy. The first record of his appearance in public was published at Leipsic. This was at a concert at Berlin, when he was but nine years of age. His piano-forte performance on that occasion is described as a marvel of intelligence and digital skill.

It was not till Meyerbeer had reached the age of fifteen that he commenced his deeper and more scientific studies. He was fortunate in the choice of a master. The Abbé Vogler, who was one of the greatest theorists, and perhaps the first organist in Germany, had opened a school, which was numerously attended, and amongst the fellow-pupils of Meyerbeer were young men whose names are never spoken of but with the deepest admiration; such as Weber, Winter, Knecht, Ritter, etc., and the first of these was Meyerbeer's bosom friend. With such worthy subjects for emulation it is not wonderful that the young musician's genius daily expanded. At eighteen years of age he produced his first opera "*Jephthah*." In this production all the ancient scholastic rules were strictly observed. It obtained a fair portion of success, and the Abbé Vogler, in his enthusiasm, signed the *brevet* of a *maestro* for the young composer, adding his blessing and giving up his tutelage.

Meyerbeer visited Vienna in 1813, where Hummel was at the



summit of his popularity as a pianist, and we have the testimony of Czerny and Moscheles that he was a successful rival to this eminent artist, winning equal applause, but with a style of playing peculiarly his own. In the same year he was intrusted with the composition of an opera for the court, entitled "Alcimeleck, oder die beiden Kalifen," founded on a story in the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." At this period no music but Italian had a chance of being listened to in the Austrian capital; it is not to be wondered at, therefore, that this work, written upon an opposite principle, and very nearly in the same style with his "Jephthah," failed completely. The veteran, Salieri, who had taken a great liking to Meyerbeer, consoled him on his bad success, assuring him that the opera, notwithstanding the almost dry severity of its style, was far from being destitute of melody, and recommending him to visit Italy, where he would soon enable himself to recover this check. The Italian style, to which, while in Germany, Meyerbeer had shown so much repugnance, now became the object of his admiration. "Tancredi," the first opera of Rossini's which he heard, transported him. After this he wrote several operas in succession, almost every one of which met with complete success.

In 1818 he brought out at Padua an opera *semi-seria*, entitled "Costanza e Romilda," which was very successful. In the same year he wrote the music for Metastasio's "Semiramide riconosciuta," and produced it at the grand theatre of Turin; the next year at

Venice he brought out "Emma di Resburgo"; and both were extremely well received. Meyerbeer took the opportunity of a visit to his native city to produce this last opera there in 1821; but it was received with anything but favor. The composer was denounced by the journalists as a renegade from the German school in which he had been reared; the public adopted the opinion of the press, and the management of the theatre had such reasons to be dissatisfied with the effect of the work, that, when subsequently "Il Crociato" was spreading Meyerbeer's fame all over Europe, a performance of that opera could not be ventured in Berlin. Weber, who was then director of the theatre at Dresden, agreed in opinion with the critics, and thought he should be serving the reputation of his friend by bringing out at the German theatre his "Alcimeleck," at the same time that his "Emma" was being performed at the Italian theatre. He wrote several articles pointing out and lamenting the change of style which Meyerbeer had adopted, and hoped at once to reconcile the public to his earlier work, and induce the composer to return to his first, and as Weber was persuaded, his better manner. The result did not answer the wishes or expectations of the critic; but it deserves to be mentioned to his honor, that, notwithstanding the decided opinion he had expressed on the subject, he caused all his friend's Italian operas to be performed at Dresden, and took so much pains in bringing them out, that they were nowhere better, or perhaps so well, performed.

Meyerbeer returned to Italy, and brought out at Venice his "*Margherita d' Anjou*," which was afterwards given in London; and, in 1823, "*L' Esule di Granata*."

The work that first brought the name of Meyerbeer into France and England, "*Il Crociato in Egitto*," was produced at Venice at the end of 1824, with even more success than his previous Italian operas. The composer was repeatedly called for and crowned upon the stage, and soon after made the tour of Italy in order to preside at the performance of his new opera in all the principal theatres of that country. In the spring of the following year the "*Crociato*" was produced in London; and in 1826 the composer visited Paris, where his work was received with enthusiasm. This event may be said to complete the second period of Meyerbeer's career.

Meyerbeer married in 1827, but the death of his two children threw a gloom over him which was not quickly dispelled; he passed two years in retirement, and it was, doubtless, during this time that he brought out those compositions of a more serious cast, which have so highly distinguished him as a composer of sacred music. Amongst them we may remark the "*Stabat Mater*," "*Misere-re*," "*Te Deum*," and an oratorio entitled "*Dieu et la Nature*." But the effect of all these compositions was only a shadowing forth of the brilliant success of "*Robert le Diable*," brought out at Paris in 1831. This splendid music did more towards raising the reputation of the composer than all his previous works. Admirably

adapted for popularity by its stirring melodies, and, above all, its strongly marked contrasts and dramatic effects, it seized immediate hold of the imagination. It has been translated into every European language, and it continues to be a standard work in every permanent lyric theatre.

The rare attractions of this opera were the cause of the production of "Les Huguenots." It appeared at Paris in February, 1836, but did not at first realize the hopes that had been built upon it: how popular it has become need not be repeated. "Les Huguenots" was not played in London till 1842, when it was unsuccessfully given by a German company; and it did not take its stand here in general esteem till its production at the Royal Italian Opera in 1848.

At the time when Mendelssohn received his appointment from the King of Prussia in 1841, that famous patron of genius, proud also of another of his subjects who had won distinction in the same department of art, created and conferred on Meyerbeer the office of General Director of Music, which he held till his death.

The next important production of Meyerbeer was a cantata with scenic illustrations, called "La Festa nella Corte di Ferrari," which was written for a fête given by the King of Prussia in 1843. The opera of "Vielka" was written for the inauguration of the new opera house at Berlin in 1844. It was reproduced at Vienna in 1847, and the chief portion of it was subsequently incorporated in the French opera of "L'Étoile du Nord."

In 1846 Meyerbeer wrote music for "*Struensee*," a posthumous tragedy of his brother Michael Beer. This was followed by "*Le Prophète*," which was produced at Paris in 1849. An Italian version of this work was brought out in London in the same year.

"*L'Étoile du Nord*" was given at Paris in February, 1854. The success in England of Meyerbeer's two last operas had been so great as to induce the management of the Italian theatre here to engage the composer's assistance for the immediate reproduction of this work, as had been done in the case of "*Le Prophète*." In this instance the composer had to write recitatives for the Italian version. The success of the opera did not equal that of its predecessors.

In 1859 "*Le Pardon du Ploërmel*" was produced in Paris, and was immediately transplanted to London, whither Meyerbeer came to superintend the rehearsals. It was produced under the title of "*Dinorah*." Meyerbeer wrote in the same year some music for the Paris celebration of the centenary of Schiller's birth.

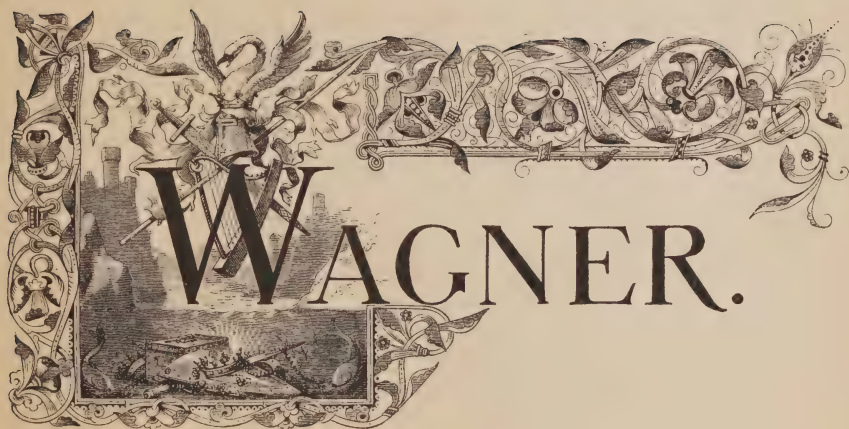
This great composer died at Paris on the 2d of May, 1864, and was buried at Berlin on the 7th of the same month.

"*L'Africaine*," Meyerbeer's last great work, was produced after his death at Paris, in the season of 1865; and on the 22d of July, in the same year, in London.

Though born and trained in Germany, there is little or nothing of the home spirit in Meyerbeer's music. To borrow the words of the late Mr. Chorley: "When he wrote for Italy, he was unable,

like Hasse, and other of his countrymen who have adopted the Southern stage, thoroughly to Italianize himself, — to assume the ease and the *disinvoltura* which characterize all the theatrical music of the South. In fact, till the grand opera of Paris, with all its resources, — in those days more vast than were to be found elsewhere, — was open to him, Meyerbeer did not find his style or his vocation, which was to produce elaborate dramas in music of the eclectic school."







RICHARD WAGNER.

THE particulars of the biography of this remarkable man—the great reformer of dramatic music—are chiefly derived from his own “Communications to his Friends.”

Richard Wagner was born at Leipsic on the 10th of May, 1813. He thinks it a good fortune that he lost his father in his earliest years; for after relating the story of a king who drove from his palace a certain young fairy, who wanted to endow his new-born son with a spirit of discontent with the actual, and of passionate pursuit of the new, he says that this same fairy comes to us all at our birth, and that we might “all become geniuses,” if she were not repulsed from us by what is called *education*. “Without let or hindrance,” he adds, “after the death of my father the fairy glided into my cradle and bestowed on me the gift that never left me, and which, in complete independence, has made me always my own

teacher, directing me in life and art. *Behold, in that consists all genius.*" But the boy was not isolated from all influences. He had family relations, a mother, a sister, a brother, all connected somehow with the theatre, who made him frequent the side scenes; and there he imbibed a dramatic taste. He played little plays in his own chamber; he invented his own subjects, and took no pleasure in the hackneyed drama which he saw. He was sent to a gymnasium ("neglected as his education was"), where he acquired a knowledge of antiquity and a taste for poetry and music; and he even tried his hand at painting, until the painter, who had received him into his house, died.

"I was writing dramas," says Wagner, "when at the age of fifteen I became acquainted with Beethoven's Symphonies; these decided my exclusive passion for the study of music, which had acted powerfully on my organization ever since I heard the 'Frey-schutz' of Weber. Still, my studies in this art never turned me from my propensity to imitate the poets; only this propensity submitted itself to the musical impulse, and I cultivated poetry only from the musical point of view. Thus, I remember, in my exultation about the 'Pastoral Symphony,' I composed a *comédie champêtre*, borrowing the subject from Goethe's 'Lovers' Humors.' I made no poetical sketch; I wrote the verses and the music at once, and let the dramatic situations and their musical expression arise conjointly."



In the beginning of his eighteenth year he was deeply excited by the revolution of 1830 and the unhappy fate of Poland. Too young to be an actor in those events, his emotion sought vent in the writing of a great deal of instrumental music, particularly sonatas, overtures, and one symphony, which was performed at a subscription concert in 1833. Wagner did not hear it, because poor health had obliged him to leave Leipsic and seek a milder climate at Würtzburg, near his brother, professor of singing and father of the famous *prima donna* Johanna Wagner.

After a year of repose he became director of music in the theatre at Magdeburg. So far, as he says himself, he had been but an imitator of the style of renowned composers. The "Oberon" of Weber and the "Vampire" of Marschner, then in vogue at Leipsic, suggested to him the text of an opera entitled "The Fairies," which he drew from one of Gozzi's novels. He set it once to music, a mere echo of his impressions of Beethoven, Weber, and Marschner. About this time passions of another and more private nature got possession of him and modified his ideas. He wrote another opera, "The Novice of Palermo," which was represented on the Magdeburg stage on the 23d of March, 1836, and failed. His chagrin led him to resign his place. In 1837 we find him at Königsberg as conductor of the theatre orchestra; but for reasons not known he remained there only a few months. It appears that he married in this period, as he says, too lightly.

He was afterwards engaged as musical director of the theatre at Riga, and there commenced a comic opera on a subject taken from the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." He was soon disgusted with this place, and resolved to go to Paris. Driven by despair, "he broke," as he says, "the relations which had existed till that moment," and was *en route* for Paris without sufficient means for such a journey. The vessel in which he embarked was wrecked upon the coast of Norway; but finally he reached the shores of France, and in a few days entered Paris, possessing nothing but the sketch of an opera and the hope of better times. "I trusted in the universal language of music to fill the gulf which my unmistakable instinct told me existed between me and Parisian life."

At Paris poor Wagner was obliged to submit to drudgery for a living. He worked for the music-sellers in arranging music little congenial to his taste. He tried composition, but signally failed; but was more successful in literary labors, and two novels from his pen were remarkable for interest of subject and originality of form.

Two years of fruitless effort in Paris convinced Wagner that that was no place for his ideas and tastes. One thought now occupied him, which was, to return to Germany and procure a representation in a grand theatre of his "Rienzi," and which seemed to him the complete realization of the idea he had pursued from early youth. He had also finished his "Fliegende Holländer" (Flying Dutchman), and was negotiating with his country for the admission of these

works in some capital. His evil fortunes were suddenly at an end. He received letters from Dresden and Berlin informing him of the acceptance of "Rienzi" at the theatre of one of those cities, and of "Der Fliegende Holländer" at the other.

On his way to Dresden to bring out his "Rienzi," Wagner followed the valley of Thuringia, and passed near the castle of Wartburg. He had long conceived the idea of a new work in which he proposed to break definitely with the existing forms of the musical drama and place the art under new conditions. From the moment of passing this castle (the scene of the opening of his opera) he was elaborating the subject of "Tannhäuser," and caressing his imagination with the hope of a great success.

The new theory, propounded by Wagner, to borrow Mr. Hullah's words, is simply this,—"that the world has not yet seen a work of art in the production of which the poet and the painter and the musician and the *corps dramatique* have worked with equal energy and success,—that such a work is possible,—and that, being achieved, it would at once restore poetry to its ancient influence on the feelings and the actions of mankind, turn painting to a thoroughly practical account, and transform music from the mere amusement of an idle hour into a vehicle for communicating the noblest impulses and exciting to the noblest deeds."

Wagner's two operas "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin," after successive representations, have achieved triumphant success. During

the years 1849 and 1850 his name was current in Germany chiefly through the efforts of Liszt to convince the public of the value of the Wagner operas, in which he recognized a new era for art. Through the Goethe-like supremacy of Liszt in matters of art at Weimar, the operas were repeatedly brought out there in the Court theatre; enthusiastic reports appeared in the principal German musical journals, and a strong and enthusiastic party sprung up who were loud in welcoming the so-called "music of the future."

The work with which Wagner now seeks to engage the public is his much-talked-of "Nibelungen Trilogy." This extraordinary production is composed of four distinct parts, the "Vorspiel," or introduction, "Rheingold," followed by "Die Walküre," "Siegfried," and "Götterdämmerung." The two former, "Das Rheingold" and "Die Walküre," have already been performed at the Munich Court theatre. "Siegfried" has, we believe, not yet seen the light of the boards; and the music of the "Götterdämmerung" is not yet finished. Wagner himself has written excellent essays on the "Nibelungen" and its explanation, and to those desirous of getting a proper understanding of Wagner's works we commend the second volume of his collected writings.

At Bayreuth, a small town of Central Germany, in May, 1872, was performed a ceremony of some importance to art. In that out-of-the-way place Richard Wagner laid the foundation-stone of a theatre in which his works are to be performed at stated intervals

before a select audience of sympathizing friends. Once or twice a year the Maestro intends assembling in this artistic retreat a circle of real connoisseurs, there in delightful seclusion, with his chosen band, to sacrifice to the Muses, undisturbed by the presence of unappreciative and frivolous adversaries. The remaining portion of the year, eleven months or so, the building will probably remain unused, as Bayreuth, with its twenty thousand inhabitants, is hardly in a position to turn a large and pretentious theatre to account.

"The eccentric nature of the enterprise," to quote the words of the "Times" Prussian Correspondent, "in as far as it reflects the personal character of its originator, hardly needs comment. In his many controversial writings Wagner has so often and so loudly represented himself as the creator of a new style of art, destined to outdo and annihilate everything else, that no one can be surprised at seeing him adopt extraordinary expedients for the proper performance of his most extraordinary works. But that his particular style of art should have elicited applause from a considerable portion of the public, and that at an age seemingly devoted to the exclusive pursuit of commerce and politics, should have gratified the whim of this singular man and built him a temple all to himself, is a striking feature in the intellectual aspect of the times."

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